

# **Mark Koslow's Account of the Schuon Cult**

Written September 1991 for cult members to help them get out  
Typed by Rama Commaraswamy

**Version originale en anglais**





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Frithjof Schuon = Isa Nurudin Achmed  
Jesus • light of religion • the Glorified.  
Sa. Aminah = Maude Murray  
Sa Badriyah = Sharlyn Romaine  
Sa Hamidah = Barbara Perry  
Sa. Latifah = Catherine Schuon  
Si. Abdul Ali = John Murray  
Si Qassim = Jeffery Willsey  
Sa. Suad = Deborah  
Si Kamaladin = Michael Fitzgerald  
Si Abdul-Latif = Michael Pollack

you may ask me about  
other names.

## FRITHJOF SCHUON - AN ACCOUNT

DEDICATED TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN - JULY-SEPT. 1991

### INTRODUCTION

I became a disciple of Frithjof Schuon or Shaykh Isa Nurradin Achmed after a five year period of devotion to his books. As a result of these books I spent short periods of time in Russian orthodox monasteries, visited Red Indian reservations, exposed myself to Vedanta and Tibetan Buddhism and considered for some years becoming an orthodox Christian monk. I came into contact with Schuon through Huston Smith, moved to Bloomington and became a Moslem on Schuon's advice. I discontinued my profession of as a repairer and restorer of oriental carpets when I moved to Bloomington. Due to lack of rug-work, I became a handy man, house painter and framemaker for the tariqa or spiritual brotherhood. I was initiated into Schuon's method 9 months after my arrival in Bloomington in June of 1989. My relationship with Sa. Amīnah, Schuon's supposed third wife, began about the time of my initiation in March of 1990. I became "married" to her, or so we thought, in July of 1990. Those who wish to know this story can read the Afterword. I was given the fifth and sixth themes of meditation, the Alchemy and the Primordial Dance, as well as the sexual alchemy in rapid succession, all at this time. I studied painting with Schuon and painted 5 "icons" under his direction.

About Mr. Schuon: he purports to be a Moslem and Sufi Shaykh and exponent of the Religio Perennis. He has written brilliantly on metaphysics, is an artist and leader of the tariqa Mariamiah. He formerly lived in Lausanne, Switzerland, but now lives in Bloomington, Indiana, where 50 to 100 followers adhere to him and his teachings. He has some 500-1000 followers in European countries, Africa, America, South America, the near east and Malaysia. This book assumes some knowledge of Schuon's life, person, doctrine and method.

The contents of this book represent my disillusionment with Schuon and his tariqa. I once believed he was a prophet, an Avatara, and the equal or more of Solomon. I longed to be closer to him and Sa. Amīnah brought me close to him so that, for a year I knew much of what he said and did. This proximity led to a tragedy wherein Schuon and his fourth wife destroyed my relationship with Sa. Aminah. In a stroke I lost the woman I loved and saw, at the same time the spiritual corruption and pathology of Schuon. Thus, I see now that my former "innocent" devotion to Schuon was an error, a sweet error, through which I willingly deceived myself. Many who believe in Schuon now are deceived as I was. I know what it means to prefer a beautiful lie to a hard truth.

The spiritual danger for one such as me is to fall into self-pity or bitterness, and with God's help I seek to avoid these excesses. But it is a fact that my knowledge of Schuon comes from proximity to him, from both direct and indirect experience of his corruption, and this suffering is not something subjective, but an objective fact, and constitutes for me a truth, an evidence and even a proof of Schuon's falsity and corruption. Moreover, I have learned since leaving Schuon's group how consistently Schuon has despitely abused others, and the suffering of these people corroborates mine and leads finally to a picture of Schuon which is appalling and undeniable.

There may be aspects of Schuon's books that are true, though globally they seem to me works of a universalist ambition. There may be aspects of Schuon's paintings that convey a certain beauty, but this beauty seems to me more a seduction towards error than an theophany. Even Schuon's "Primordial gatherings" present a certain beauty or truth despite the fact that they contain criminal acts. Thus many, wising to avoid the hard truth, cling to the beautiful lie. Many others, out of complacency, stubbornness, to preserve a reputation, to keep a false peace, to avoid having to re-examine Schuon's doctrine and method, or to avoid admitting the fact that Schuon has betrayed us all; for these and other reasons many will equivocate, rationalize and relativize Schuon's errors. There is a proud and defiant belief that Schuon cannot be wrong, a belief advocated above all by Schuon himself, since it is a belief inculcated by Schuon's doctrine and method; this belief I have found to be resistant even to the most shocking and gross facts, facts which cannot be denied.

Since I have left Schuon's group I have learned that for many self-interest is more important than the truth.<sup>1</sup> I do not blame anyone for this, for human weakness is an inevitability. God is not the icy, despising and judgmental embodiment of gnostic esoterism such as Schuon claims He is. God is not an elitist who looks down from a mountain top of knowledge upon a humanity that, apart from those who prestate themselves before Schuon, is "profane" and disgusting. God is most present, not where man exalts himself, but where he admits he might be wrong and led astray. God has a compassionate concern for others and He can only help those who can admit they may be wrong and who know that they need his help and ask for it. God is not exalted by man's knowledge of Him, and man should not think himself exalted by his knowing of God. Schuon condemned Sa. Amīnah and I for what he called "this damned religion of the heart." But love, compassion or charity is precisely what Schuon lacks and one who lacks this is not a saint. May God have mercy of Frithjof Schuon therefore, and I pray for his soul and for all those who defend his errors, equivocate, rationalize and seek the truth where it cannot be found. god is an open door, not a closed one; and if Schuon in his pride has closed a door upon God, God could not close a door upon him.

<sup>1</sup> The writer has since returned to the Roman Catholic faith in which he was born - which is to say, the traditional faith of the pre-Conciliar reform.

IN

There are two objections which have already been levelled against this account which I would like to address. Firstly, it is said that I interpret too much. I would say in regard to this that God alone is the Absolute Fact. All contingent facts are subject to inevitable interpretation simply by virtue of some facts being chosen for presentation rather than others. It is thus entirely a question of how the facts are presented and whether or not this presentation, which already implies an interpretation, is true or not true. The history of modern science goes to show that there are no facts without interpretations and moreover in Schuon's case we are not dealing with errors susceptible of scientific inquiry, but rather with spiritual errors of an exceedingly subtle and complex nature. Thus if I interpret and perhaps speak strongly, it is because I know what I know of Schuon and I wish to say after Dante, beware, "all ye who enter here." My purpose in this book is to expose Schuon's secrets much like one lets a light shine into a cave, and my purpose is this is to provoke an inquiry into just who this man really is. Moreover, I wish to help those who are ambiguous about Schuon and hopefully prevent others from making the mistakes I have made. Lastly, I wish to provoke a thorough examination of Schuon's personal doctrine and method in order that his errors might be examined and God, who is the truth, might be served.

The other objection I would like to address is the effort to discredit Sa. Amīnah as a witness. This is an *ad hominem* argument. I have confirmed most of the facts I learned from Sa. Amīnah through other sources, often Schuon's other wives, and in some cases, Schuon himself. For instance, I confirmed the way Schuon and Sa. Badriyah paint, and the Vision of the Virgin, with Sa. Badriyah and Schuon himself. However this may be, Sa. Amīnah has been in a position to know more about Schuon since 1974 than anyone alive. Moreover, Sa. Amīnah's tragic failure to remove herself from the mental tyranny of Schuon's group has led her into unspeakable suffering, and thus it seems to me ungentlemanly and ungenerous to question the reliability of her witness when her suffering itself is a witness against Schuon.

Lastly, I have tried to be as honest a witness as possible. I wish to thank Dr. Rama Coomaraswamy and Dr. Wolfgang Smith for whose spiritual and emotional help I am deeply grateful. God is the Truth, the Way and the Life, and if what I say here is not the truth, then God have mercy on me and show me the strait way.

I begin with a description of Schuon's painting. This may be illogical, but I do so as they lead to an understanding of Schuon's misuse of the Virgin, his belief in his "deification" and thence to the Primordial Gatherings.

## THE PAINTINGS

The paintings of Schuon and his fourth wife Sa. Badriyah are presented to the fuqara in hierarchical order. The classifications are (1) - paintings which everyone may see; (2) restricted paintings which not everyone may see; (3) esoteric or "tantric" paints which only the elite or inner circle may see. Decisions about who may see what are made by Schuon and Sa. Badriyah, and sometimes by other dignitaries, such as Sa. Amīnah who showed me many secret things before I became romantically involved with her.

The point of bringing up these classifications is that the paintings exist on a scale of grades, a given painting being either more or less "esoteric." The most esoteric paintings are those which picture Schuon naked so that one can see his sexual parts, especially those paintings where his sexual parts are the focus of the painting. these paintings are highly guarded, and I do not have any photos of them. I have only a photo of the nude Schuon from which Sa. Badriyah made what she considers her greatest painting. According to Sa. Amīnah, Sa. Badriyah considers she "was born in order to paint this painting" (in Sa. Badriyah's words). This painting pictures Schuon on his knees with his legs spread so that his penis hangs free and is emphasized by a golden light behind it. If I remember correctly his hands are in the mudra position for "the jewel in the heart of the lotus," the Buddhist formula for which in Sanskrit is OM MANI PADME HUM. I think his eyes are closed.

The other category of the most esoteric paintings are those derived from the Great Vision of 1965. I will describe this vision shortly. These paintings seek to give plastic expression to this vision. There are many attempts to depict this vision. Sa. Amīnah reported to me conversations between Schuon and Sa. Badriyah in which they discussed the difficulty of picturing this vision. The problem Schuon and Sa. Badriyah faced was how to depict a vision of sexual union with the Virgin in a manner which was both static and hierarchical.

Another category of the most esoteric paintings is that of the Pte-San-Win, the Buffalo Cow Woman of the Sioux and Lallah Yogishwarī, a naked Hindu saint, whose master told her to "go from the outward to the Inward," and who said "therefore, naked, I dance." This dancing naked is one of Sa. Badriyah's primary functions to perform for Schuon and his tariqa. She often dances naked for Schuon and Sa. Amīnah in private. These dances are Hindu, Balinese, and both South and North American Indian. This should not be understood literally however, as Sa. Badriyah has no training in these dances; they are entirely improvisational, always nude, and statically erotic, if such a phrase is allowable.



I mention these dances because the position and poses that occur in them bear a relation to Schuon's and Sa. Badriyah's paintings. All of these paintings are taken from poses that Sa. Badriyah has made in these dances, or which have occurred in nude photographs of her. The most esoteric paintings of Lalla and the Pte-San-Win are spread-legged with pubic hair shaved, either kneeling or lying down. All these paintings constitute a kind of spiritual-sexual gallery of Schuon's 4th wife, his "mahashakti." Sa. Amīnah told me many times that, according to Schuon, the sexual parts express the "heart," and Schuon and Sa. Badriyah worship each other through the heart-sexual parts. The most esoteric paintings make public this worship of each others sexual parts. The phrase "porno-esoterism" occurs to me, but perhaps such a phrase is too interpretive.

I mention all these things in view of describing the Great Vision. But before I describe this vision, I must describe the manner in which Schuon and Sa. Badriyah paint, since this is related to the Great Vision.

Schuon does not like to look at women who are near or past menopause; a Shakti of the prophet must be young. Thus Sa. Amīnah told me that when Sa. Badriyah came to Schuon, Schuon lost all interest in her (i.e. Sa. Amīnah), and except for some attempts at having sexual relations with both wives at once, he "hardly looked" at Sa. Amīnah. Therefore, sometime after Sa. Badriyah came, the tradition began of Sa. Amīnah spending one hour three days a week with Schuon and Sa. Badriyah instead of her former 3 hours, 3 days a week alone with him.

After a certain amount time the practice developed that when Sa. Amīnah would arrive at the apartment or house of Sa. Badriyah, Sa. Badriyah would be naked, as she nearly always is, and they would get out a blanket to be spread on the floor, take out Sa. Badriyah's paintbox and a tripod easel. Sa. Badriyah would lie down naked with her legs spread on the floor. She would be propped up on one elbow so that the other hand was free to paint. Sa. Amīnah would lie on the couch or divan behind her, dressed. Schuon would lie on the floor so that his head was on the thigh of Sa. Badriyah and he would spend the entire time looking at the vagina of Sa. Badriyah, even during conversation or if Badriyah asked advice about what to do next on the painting she was making. This is how Schuon and Badriyah paint their paintings, Schuon telling her what to do while he looks at her vagina. More than once Sa. Amīnah bitterly complained that all she could see of her so-called husband was part of one eye and a mass of hair. The one eye was looking at the sexual parts of what Sa. Amīnah called "his only wife and Shakti." At other times Sa. Amīnah would deceive herself by trying to put a good face on the matter and she would say that it was a great privilege to be the witness to the Prophet with his Shakti. Once she even tried to maintain that she was very virtuous, like Sa. Hamidah, who apparently can also suppress her sense of propriety, because both of them can be "magnanimous" and watch their husband make love to someone else.

It should be added that this manner of painting is not restricted to periods when Sa. Amīnah is with them. Schuon thus spends quite a lot of time looking at this particular part of a woman's anatomy.

## THE VISIONS OF SA. BADRIYAH

Before I speak of the Great Vision I should record the visions of Sa. Badriyah as there is a close connection between them. What follows are Sa. Amīnah's description of these visions as I recorded them during a phone conversation. There are other visions besides these, but I mention the most important. "First she (Sa. Badriyah) dreamt she was married to the Shaykh." This while she was married to another faqir. Then Sa. Badriyah had another dream in which "a tall beautiful woman came floating towards her - she followed her - it was the Virgin - who led her to a mountain - on top of which was a castle - there were many old sages or prophets there - they said to her - "our King is sick and you are needed to console him." This King was supposed to be Schuon. Lastly Sa. Badriyah had a waking vision where as happened to Schuon "the name descended upon her". Sa. Amīnah said that "the name entered into her vagina from below and traveled up to her heart. She heard the words "Isa, Isa" while this happened." From this point on, Sa. Amīnah told me, Sa. Badriyah could no longer have sexual relations with her husband, Barry Macdonald, and felt "married to the Divine Name." To Sa. Badriyah being married to the divine Name, to Schuon, and to God are the same thing.

If I may be allowed to make some observations about this vision I would say the following. The only example I can think of where God has entered a woman is when God, through the Angel Gabriel and the Holy Spirit, visited the Virgin Mary at the Annunciation. This occurrence is something which was without precedent and unrepeatable. That God, through His Name, should enter into the vagina of a woman such as Sa. Badriyah, thereby making her of the same stature as the Virgin Mary, is not an acceptable possibility.

The issue of the union of the Virgin with the Spirit of God was Christ Himself. The issue of the divine Name entering into Sa. Badriyah is illustrated in a series of increasingly blasphemous paintings which seek to make Schuon the equal of Christ. The other issue of Sa. Badriyah's union with the divine Name is her own rise to power as the most important wife of Schuon and a demagogic leader of Schuon's sacred brotherhood. Under these circumstances, how could such a vision possibly be true? Her authority and power is such that she not only speaks with the authority of Schuon, but even has and exercises the right of entering the home of the inner-circle fuqura and rearranging their homes in accordance with her own ideas of how they should be arranged - this also on the authority of Schuon.



Schuon's obsession, for such it must be called, with the female sexual parts began quite early in his life. I will write of this shortly, but I noticed today in his "great prophetic poem" to which he refers to so often in the *Memoirs*, (privately distributed to members of the tariqa) the line "Thou art that which in madness I long contemplated." The name of this poem is "to the unknown beloved." Indeed, who is this woman that he paints? It is certainly not the Blessed Virgin.

## PORTRAITS OF THE SHAYKH

The portraits of the shaykh, which Sa. Badriyah had the idea to begin painting and which Schuon encouraged and advised and corrected her about - (they were all painted in the poses described in the section called "the paintings") picture Schuon as a Prophet and Avatara. That he would encourage and oversee such a practice, and even allow his disciples to offer personal prayers to him through these portraits, indicates his vanity and narcissism. Another example of this is the extraordinary number of photographs he allows to have taken of him. There is a faqirah (female disciple) in Germany who claims to receive answers from Schuon through prayers made to one of these nude portraits. (I forget her name). Sa. Badriyah prays to a portrait of Schuon daily. During one of her jealous fits, of which there have been many, she took her portrait of him off the wall because she didn't wish to look at him. Sa. Amīnah told me that the Shaykh psychically knew that Sa. Badriyah had done this, and reproached her for her underestimation of him. Sa. Amīnah said that Schuon psychically knows everything Sa. Badriyah thinks and does.

About Sa. Badriyah's jealous fits, I will mention two stories. Mark Goren (S. Hatim), who lived next to sa. Badriyah, once picked her up, looking somewhat crazed, walking along side a highway in the middle of the night. Sa. Amīnah confirmed this and said it was because she was jealous of Schuon's need to press himself against naked women, a practice he feels compelled to do often. Another time, in April of this year, there was a small completely naked primordial gathering and Sa. Badriyah was playing a small drum with a drum stick. Sa. Hind got too close and was too intimate with the naked Schuon so Sa. Badriyah hit her over the head with the drumstick.

To continue with Schuon's image of himself - in December of January of 1990-91 Sa. Badriyah began, with Schuon's approval, to teach the majority of the fuqara (those in the inner circle) the prayer poem which Sa. Hamidah and Sa. Amīnah had recited for years. This prayer says:

"O Isa, son of Mary, on thee be peace,  
The sun is for thy body a rainment,  
The presence of the All-Holy is a  
healing for the wombs.

Thy body is a veil for the ever forgiving,  
and a descent of mercy for mankind."

This poem, recited in Arabic, is interpreted by Schuon's followers in the following manner: Schuon's body, like Christ's body heals people; also it identifies Schuon's body with the highest Divine Name, the All-Holy, as if Schuon were God.

In contrast to these sublimities, I recall one day last August or September (1990) when Sa. Amīnah came over on the day of her visit with Schuon. Whenever she came over after these visits and she came over after all of her visits, I would lie on the couch with her, and begin to ask her, what did he say, what did Sa. Badriyah say, what were they painting and so on. With all my questions, her descriptions would sometimes take up an hour. During one of these times she told me (as I mentioned earlier) that Sa. Badriyah showed him some pictures she had taken of him. He was wounded to the core by the poor appearance of his own image and in a fit of vanity he got asthma. Both Sa. Badriyah and Sa. Amīnah had to quickly comfort him, run their hands over him and tell him how great and handsome he is, how majestic his body looks, how he is a prophet and how grace or baraka pours out from his body. This had to go on for a 1/2 hour or an hour. The extreme excess of his reactions to these photographs is quite typical of him, and also typical is the reaction of the two women. This is their primary function: to keep Schuon constantly aware of his greatness and spiritual sublimity. I neglected to add that Schuon threatened the two women who were comforting him with stopping the primordial gatherings since he thought his body ugly and old, and that no would wish to look at him. They had to talk him out of doing this.

Many times I have seen Schuon pose for photographs and one can see him breath deeply and endeavor to look severe and majestic. He will not smile for photos because he says a smile is too personal and individualistic. Schuon hardly ever smiles in any case. Sa. Amīnah in all her years with him said she only heard him laugh a few times. She also said that he almost never smiles; One recalls a French proverb Schuon quotes: "a sad saint is a sad excuse for a saint." She also said that he hates to look in the mirror because he does not wish to know what his own expressions are as such a thing would make him too aware of himself. I do not understand how a man who throws a tantrum of wounded vanity over some nude photographs of himself, and who clearly loves his own image, yet does not want to look at himself in a mirror.

I recall however, an exception to this not wishing to look at himself in a mirror. Sa. Amīnah said that Schuon, when making love, liked to put them in all sorts of positions so that he could observe these positions in a mirror placed against a wall.

I will mention also another story that indicates something of Schuon's opinion of himself. Sa. Amīnah told me that sometime during the late 1970's Schuon was praying the Moslem prayers in the apartment of Sa. Amīnah and S. Abdul Ali in Pully, Switzerland. Schuon got up in the middle of the prayers to write something down, something she rarely saw him do. Later on she found out that he had been praying to understand the nature of the Prophet. He had a vision, while praying, of the inner nature of the Prophet as a constellation of six stars. These six stars were the six themes (purity, spiritual activity, contentment, fervor, discernment, identity). He realized the six themes were a "spiritual portrait of the Prophet" and the Prophet was Schuon himself. As a result of this vision Schuon wrote the *Mystery of the Prophetic Substance*. This essay, as is more or less true of all of Schuon's writings, is self-referential. I mention this story to indicate that Schuon's books and his method and person are not separate entities. What Schuon is now, he has always been. I will have occasion to argue this point more than once in the following pages. I apologize to the reader if this means I must sometimes repeat myself, but so many people seem to think there are two Schuon's, the Schuon of the books and the Schuon who has temper tantrums and is obsessed with female genitalia, that I must often return to this point.

## THE EMPEROR'S CLOTHES

This section may appear to be a digression, but to understand both the Great Vision and the Primordial Gatherings properly one must understand how Schuon views himself. His narcissism, in my opinion, is unsurpassable and it is because of this that he feels he has a right to the body of the Blessed Virgin as well as to the bodies of all the women in the tariqa.

In Nov. or Dec. of last year, when Sa. Latifah was away and Schuon was at Sa. Badriyah's house, Sa. Amīnah took me to see the personal quarters of Schuon. She showed me an enormous clothes closet, full of Tibetan robes, Hindu Nehru jackets, Islamic clothes, American Indian clothes and other things of this kind. The traditional vestments of many cultures were represented, all tailored for Schuon.

In the bathroom there hung his "primordial" costumes, that is the costumes he has designed for himself, which are both quasi-Hindu and quasi-Red Indian, and which display his chest and private parts. This concern with clothes and in contrast, his own nudity, is a dialectical metaphor Schuon uses both in his writing and paintings: Clothes are exoterism and nudity is esoterism.

Given these facts, and given the cliché that "clothes define the man," it should be clear that Schuon dresses himself up in the vestments of all the world's religions: he is a Red Indian chief; Hindu guru; Islamic Shaykh, Tibetan Llama, etc. Thus even if one looks at the content of Schuon's clothes

closet one sees that this man thinks himself to be the nude primordial synthesis of all the world's religions, which he takes off or puts on like so many clothes.

When one goes further into Schuon's private quarters, behind his study, there are two small rooms, one of which has many curtained shelves. These shelves house his art collection. There is a shelf of nude Hindu goddesses, another of Tibetan goddesses and objects; a shelf with a Romanesque Christian Madonna and child; a shelf of Japanese dolls, little samurai, geshas, and other Japanese objects; and a closet full of American Indian artifacts. There is also a box of photographs of Christian virgins.

As with Schuon's clothes closet, his "treasure room" tells us about Schuon as an artist. Here is a man who believes himself to be the greatest painter in the world. (I once told him I thought he was the greatest painter, and he agreed.) Just as the nude Schuon is himself pure esoterism and his closet is full of the apparel of exoterism, so his treasure room is full of all the world's art, of which his own art is the quintessence and synthesis.

So likewise in regard to Schuon's books; - Schuon encourages the idea that it is not necessary to concern oneself with books other than his. (He has often said that one need read no other books than his.) Even the Koran and the bible cannot be properly understood without the aid of Schuon's books. I once said to him in an interview that Plato was great and Niffari was great, but that he was greater because he came after them and he knows more. He agreed with this and said "that's right," or "yes, of course," or something of this kind.

I think I have made the point I wished to, but I add some other comments here of related interest.

Schuon encourages the idea that he is, as it were, outside of time, or as if fallen from heaven, like mistletoe (there is a text about this which invokes the Celtic idea that mistletoe falls from heaven - on to oak trees - it doesn't of course; it is a parasite.) In any case, Schuon, the Shaykh al-baraka,<sup>2</sup> shaykh by grace, believes himself to be unique and as if born full-formed from a heavenly void. However, despite this view, one could show, and perhaps someone will one day show, that Schuon's paintings, for instance, like his poetry, are at least partially derived from the symbolist movement in art and poetry which had a considerable influence upon Schuon's father, himself a poet. The symbolist movement encouraged a dreamy esoteric nostalgia for the remote past and for what is foreign; the far east, India, orientalism; Chinoiserie; Moslem harems; erotic sultry doe-eyed Hindu women like gopis awaiting Krishna.

<sup>2</sup> Schuon was refused maqadamship, but claimed to have received the right to be a shaykh by the direct intervention of God - hence shaykh al-barrakah.

In any case, I raise this matter to point to some of the influences that determined Schuon historically; why does Schuon see himself at the summit of the world's religions, the world's art, the world's castes and races? I can't propose to answer this question systematically, but only to stimulate thought about it. I do not wish to provide definitive interpretations of Schuon but only logical and suggestive ones.

## THE GREAT VISION

Sa. Amīnah described this vision to me 3 or 4 times; only once did I write down some of what she said as she said it.

She said that "he (Schuon) needed femininity because it was the perfect complement to his discrimination." She said that Schuon told her "that when he came to a dead end, God sent him a grace that had to do with the sexual parts of the Virgin. When he began to receive graces of this kind he was quite surprised. She appeared inside of him and touched him on the inside. There was something erotic about it. She appeared inside of him. He didn't see her. It was more than seeing her. He felt her inside."

At other times Sa. Amīnah told me that it was as if the Virgin descended down upon him, naked, and she comforted his misery by consoling him with her sexual parts which she exposed to him inside of him, comforting his heart. One must recall here that to Schuon the sexual parts are the exteriorized heart.

There is another vision, sometimes called the Christmas Vision, which is less directly sexual, but which conveys a similar idea. The Great Vision above occurred in 1965 and this second vision happened in 1985, on Christmas Eve, according to Sa. Latifa (his first wife), or Catherine Schuon.

He heard on one side of him the *Ave Maria* being sung, and on the other side *Ya Maryamu alaiki salam ya Rahman, ya Rahim*, being sung. (This latter is now sung by his fuqara.) He was like a child, as he often is in these visions. He felt the breasts of the Virgin touching his back. Her legs were spread and she straddled him from behind. He put his hands on her thighs.

The fact that this vision occurred on Christmas eve, the night before the Birth of Christ, and the fact that the spread-legged position is like a birth-giving position, led him to call the paintings of this vision *The Birth Paintings*. Catherine Schuon told me that he did his first version of the birth paintings within a few days of this vision's occurrence.



It is well known in the tariqa that Schuon considers himself to be the Christ-child in these paintings. He also has said that the viewer should identify himself with Christ in these paintings.

There are other visions Schuon has had which I will record later, but they carry a similar message. They make it quite clear that not only the Virgin Mary, but most of the greatest of the world's goddesses, consider Schuon to be worthy of their bodies and sexual embraces. Be this as it may, it is important to realize that these visions do not represent primarily a sexual fixation, but rather a spiritual perversion.

As Dr. Wolfgang Smith said, and Dr. Coomaraswamy agreed, these visions represent not something authentic, but a spiritual pathology. This pathology begins quite early with Schuon. One can trace this tendency back to poems he wrote in the 1930's such as *Krishna and Radha* and *Bajadere* (see Appendix at end). This second poem describes the ecstasy of a Devadassee, a Hindu temple-prostitute, who dances wildly while animals are being sacrificed, and whose breasts become so hot she must cool herself in the Ganges. Perhaps more directly, Schuon's association of the Divine Name and a woman's sexual parts can be traced to this passage from his *Memoirs*, where he describes the spiritual rebirth he underwent after the loss of his first "great love" Madelaine.

After Madelaine had married another and had a child "there occurred what I had described at the end of my love song, that prophetic poem which I had written shortly before the first meeting with my friend, that is eleven years ago: (this was written Aug. 18, 1943.) *The whole world turned into my friend* (Madelaine). From these days onwards - I began at that time to invoke the Name three times daily using the six themes of meditation - *it was as if I had entered the cosmic body of my friend; I was within her as if within the womb.*"

Twenty years after this came the Great Vision which logically brings this early tendency of Schuon's to universalize his romantic and sexual need into a full flowering. Madelaine is replaced by the Blessed Virgin. The flighty, inconstant German girl whom he could never possess, finally becomes his as the Virgin Mary Herself, who gives Herself freely to Schuon, since such a prophet as Schuon deserves such a grace and consolation.

The logical meaning of the Great Vision, since the real Blessed Virgin gave her body to no man, but only to the Holy Spirit, is that Schuon is the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete. Already at 17 or 18 years of age Schuon writes in the memoirs:

"my whole aim should be to plant the flowering branch of the individual soul. How great is the infinity of the individual soul! The day will come when the Divine will call me 'Parakletos.'"

Here one sees the pathology. Only Christ touched the sexual parts of the Blessed Virgin at birth, but Schuon has a right to Her sexual parts because he also is "a manifestation of the Logos" (Sa. Latifah said this) because he is the Paraclete, the Spirit of Truth predicted by Christ in the Gospel of John.

Sa. Amīnah told me many times that Schuon does not think of the Virgin as a mother, but as a Beloved. Sa. Hamidah (another wife, see below) told me, in an interview, that the four wives of Schuon are only pale reflections of his great love, the Blessed Virgin. She said all the wives wish therefore to be more like the Virgin.

The sexual parts of the Blessed Virgin were a birth canal to Christ, and by implication of the "Birth Paintings" they are a source of at least spiritual rebirth to Schuon. But Christ could not claim to have been consoled by Her sexual parts. The Virgin was Mother to Christ and though she is sometimes called His Spouse or Bride, this refers to their union after the Apocostasis, and such a union is a spiritual mystery of such sacredness that to claim to imitate it in this world can only be a blasphemy and a travesty. Even if one wished to give Schuon the benefit of the doubt and say he is an Avatara, an impossible claim, but even then, union with the Virgin would be an impossibility in this world with a man of flesh and blood, having all the Karmic imperfections of which the flesh is heir.

Having stated these personal opinions and arguments, let me return to what I know of the facts. Sa. Amīnah told me that Schuon often compared her sexual parts to the Kaaba. She also said that the vagina "seems almost as important to him as the divine Name. He worships it. He asked the Virgin in prayer if he could write about her sexual parts and she said to him in a feminine voice full of intimacy, 'No, No.' It is not a matter of the worship of just the physical shape or person; the sexual parts of a woman are ananda, the gate of extinction and infinity, the Rahman. The penis is also like the divine Name, he believes." She also said He is too old to "any longer have any passion about it. He sees it as the heart." In Schuon's writing over the past ten years, one can trace a shift from emphasis upon "legitimate pleasure" to "adoration" and this shift corresponds to the onset of his impotency.

All this is confirmed by a recent article of Schuon's called *The Veil of Isis*. In this article (page 22), Schuon says, "the nudity of Isis pertains to the heart, or to the Immanent Self; instead of speaking of 'unveiling' another image could be chosen and it could be said that the Goddess takes the soul under her veil, *ab intra*; this in Sufic terms is 'knowledge through Allah' in which it is less the intelligence which perceives God than God who perceives Himself in the intelligence."

These quotations, which refer to the highest grace possible to man, union with God, - when taken in context with the Great Vision, with Schuon's admiration with Sa. Badriyah's having received the Divine Name in her vagina; in the context with the Vagina as Kaaba and Schuon's ability to contemplate the vagina for hours at a time - all of this indicates a profound spiritual madness which mixes a claim to complete spiritual realization of a prophetic order with a psycho-sexual fascination with the female organ seen, as the Zen Buddhists would say, as a "gateless gate." One must ask if Schuon is an Avatara or a pseudo-spiritual psychopath and megalomaniac? Or, to put this less drastically, it seems Schuon's personal psychology has become mixed with the most profound teachings to the extent that he has identified pure esoterism and spirituality as such with himself and his own psychic potentialities.

There is one other aspect to these visions that should be mentioned. On one of the completely naked so-called "Byzantine" icons, (Those painted by Sa. Badriyah in the last few years), Schuon has had written lines from Shaykh Al-Alawi's poem "Layla." I don't remember exactly which lines were used, but the poem says "She (Layla) favored me and drew me to her, took me in, into her precinct.... raised her cloak that hid her from me, made me marvel to distraction..... she pressed me to her, put her from me."

Shaykh Al-Alawi is here discussing a spiritual state, not a sexual fascination with a given woman. The Sufis, Rumi, for instance, have used the image of the Beloved as a spiritual metaphor. At one point in Rumi he even says that woman is not just woman, she is the Creator. Dante and Ibn Arabi both had experiences with saintly women who provided them with a possibility of union with God through a feminine Archetype. Schuon's Madelaine however is not Beatrice but an inconstant German girl and his Virgin is not the embodiment of heavenly grace, but a kind of psychical prostitute who comforts him sexually, and in fact, this is also what Schuon has made of his wives.

For the last year I spent 4 to 10 hours a day with one of these wives, and if Schuon were the prophet he claims to be her behavior would have been very different. Thus Schuon has taken the poetic tradition of the west which one sees in the *Song of Songs*, in Dante, and in lower forms in romantic and symbolist poets, and combined it with the Sufi concern to see the image of the Beloved as the image of God. He has debased and corrupted these traditions by imposing upon the most sacred of all women, the Blessed Virgin, his own bizarre and psycho-sexual fascinations.

A few last comments about these visions. Sa. Badriyah, in a text called *The Message of the Icons* - (and this text, as all that Sa. Badriyah thinks and does, has the approval of Schuon) - Sa Badriyah says in this text that the Virgin offers her naked body not only to Schuon, but also to us (i.e, the fuqara of the inner circles). Does the Blessed virgin give her body to anyone who is a



disciple of Schuon? One must ask who is Schuon, and who is this Blessed Virgin that Schuon has the right to offer Her body to others as if she were a prostitute? It seems to this writer monstrous that Schuon should lower the Blessed Virgin to the point of having her use her vulva to attract men to heaven, as if she need to use such methods.<sup>3</sup>

## THE RELIGION OF THE SEXUAL PARTS

No doubt it is true, as the Koran says, that "to God is the returning," but though there may be something normal in a man who wishes to return to God, and even, in moderation, something normal in a man who wishes to "return to the womb," or who loves God by loving Him through his wife, but has not Schuon made a religion of the Vagina and Penis? No doubt there is something of God in femininity and masculinity, but the characteristic masculine and feminine parts are not icons nor gods.

Again, I do not offer these comments in a polemical spirit, but only to draw out their implications and raise questions.

<sup>3</sup> There is one matter I failed to discuss in this section. In the first edition of the *Transcendent Unity of Religions*, Schuon's first book, there was a chapter which was suppressed in later editions called *Of the Christ Given Initiation*. The last three paragraphs of this essay explore the relation between the mouth that utters the divine name, the mouth that receives the Eucharist and the vagina that gave birth to Christ. I refer the reader to these passages as yet further proof, if proof be needed, of Schuon's pathology on this subject. No doubt, there are truths expressed in his views on this subject, and one can find such truths formulated, especially in Hindu symbolism and cosmology concerning the Yoni or Vagina of the Goddess being the counterpart of the Lingam of Shiva. but schuon's case is clearly not a case of cosmology or symbolism, but a case of metaphysical metaphor having become a pathology.

I refer the reader to these passages also to show that there are not two Schuons, the man who wrote the books and the man with a spiritual pathology. The books reflect in the highest metaphysical language both Schuon's intellectual genius and his pathology. The corpus of Schuon seen in conjunction with his visions, his memoirs, paintings, poems, and his character, amount to a prodigious effort to impose himself upon the world's religions and in fact, to use the world's religions to glorify himself. This is pride and individualism, the like of which this author cannot recall having ever seen elsewhere. Sa. Aminah and Sidl Abdul Ali both told me of Schuon's fascination with and his tendency to compare himself to Alexander, Ceasar and Napoleon. Is it going to far to call this man a megalomaniac and a paranoid?

## THE FOUR MARRIAGES

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Schuon is "married" to four women. His first wife, Sa. Latifah (Catherine) was married according to the Christian rites. (This to please Sa. Latifah's parents though according to Sa. Latifah, Schuon could not have cared less about this.) The other three by what is called "intrinsic marriage" which means that he simply declared them to be his wife. His second wife is Sa. Hamida who is also married to Sidi Abdul Qayyum and from whom she has never been divorced either legally or by Islamic practice. According to Sa. Amīnah, Sa. Hamida continued to have sexual relations with her husband intermittently after her "intrinsic marriage" to the Shaykh. In addition, the Shaykh's first wife had intimate relations with Sidi Qayyum during a ten year period, again without any formal divorce or marriage within the Islamic framework - these relations coming to an end when Sidi Abdul Qayyum's alcoholism became too much for her. The Shaykh is also "intrinsically married" to Sa. Amīnah while she remains married to Sidi Abdul Ali. When she first joined the Shaykh she refused to accept the position of concubine and demanded that of wife and it was then that he "intrinsically" married her. His last or fourth wife is Sa. Badriya, the "mahashakti." I shall discuss the Shaykh's relationship with Sa. Amīnah in more detail later.

## PRIMORDIAL GATHERINGS

"On my way to Morocco in 1965, when I was suffering from asthma and feeling ill to the point of death - owing to causes of a moral order - there occurred... the contact with the Blessed Virgin. This had as its immediate result the almost irresistible urge to be naked like her little child; from this even onwards I went naked as often as possible... A few years later this mystery came upon me again, and it did so in connection with the irresistible awareness that I am not a man like other men."

These passages from the essay *Sacred Nudity* - a repressed part of the *Memoirs*, seems to contain in germ form Schuon's principle errors - implicitly identifying himself with Christ and mixing his own desperate psychic need of female sexual consolation with the highest Female Intercessor, the heavenly Virgin. Pride and Passion; mixed with the very highest metaphysics and then pandered as the pure esoterism of the Prophet of the Religio Perennis.

Sa. Amīnah said to me "the first time I saw him naked I was aware his body had a radiance that could heal. This radiance came from the presence of God in him. When I married him he was often compelled to take his clothes off because his body radiates the truth and he wished to communicate it."

"He used to play ball in the pool of the Qayumids (in Pully, Switzerland) in a gauze loincloth that hid nothing... In restaurants he often opens his shirt so that his chest is visible."

*Sanat* Sa. Amīnah also told me recently that both she and the other wives must keep a close eye on him in restaurants because he refuses to button his pants or zip his fly <sup>because</sup> because he finds this too constraining - and the wives must make sure that his shirt, coat or scarves cover his lower area, lest he be exposed in public. *super*

This concern with his body and the attendant desire to defy conventions, whatever spiritual associations it may have with naked sanyassins in India, American Indians naked on mountain tops, Bali, and Adam and Eve, is mixed with a narcissism and an individualism. The need to defy conventions is the product of romantic individualism. Sa. Amīnah said Schuon in his 20's did things such as rudely tear his bread in half, rather than cut it with a knife, when eating with people he thought too conventional, in order to shock them with his behavior. This need to shock other people comes from an individualistic pride, common in poets and art students, but not in saints.

Be this as it may, Schuon imposes nudity on his wives - at least the last two, and at the same time, he uses his wives to defy conventions by having them express the "primordial" in this manner. Thus Sa. Badriyah is always naked both in her own house and whenever she goes to dinner at any of the houses of perhaps 30 people who constitute the inner circle of the tariqa, among them the Alids, the Thabitids, Qassimids, and Munirids. I do not quite understand this need of Schuon's to publicly display the nudity of his wives. It seems to me to involve some need of power and control. One indication of this was when I told Sa. Amīnah that I loved her and did not wish her to display her body in public, she was very moved and said that it was the first time anyone had desired her for herself, and that this made her very happy.

However this may be, given this background of the Vision of the Virgin and the consequent need of Schuon's to see himself as greater than all men and by implication, a prophet or Avatara, one now can see how the primordial gatherings developed. With these things in mind I will describe the gatherings themselves, avoiding too much detail, knowing that when others realize that these gatherings are perversions they will be described more completely.

The gatherings, which in very restricted form of small numbers of people, according to Sa. Amīnah, go back as far as the 1950's. There were small gatherings in Switzerland. They became more important when Schuon came to America. Sa. Amīnah showed me photographs of Schuon, Murray, the Polits and others in "primordial costume" which were taken earlier in the 1980's.

The primordial gatherings as they exist now combine the Indian Days, so-called "commemorations of our affinity with the Indians" with Schuon's need of nudity. there are three categories of them:

(1) Indian days for visitors and those outside the inner circle where the women wear what amount to American Indianized bikinis.

(2) Gatherings for the inner circle (perhaps 50-60 people) and "qualified" visitors. In these gatherings the women are all naked except for a very slight loin cloths, which hide hardly anything. Otherwise they have Indian jewelry on and are bare breasted. In these gatherings the Imitation Sa. Badriyah does of the bringing of the Sacred Pipe (Schuon says Sa. Badriyah is an incarnation of Pte-San-Win - Buffalo Cow woman) is performed completely naked. Another dance with Sa. Badriyah and Sa. Suad is also entirely naked.

Schuon wears an Indian war bonnet that descends to the floor and an absurd costume which is a kind of combination loin-cloth and leggings except that his genitals are not covered. It seems his pubic hair is shaved or cut off.

(3) The 3rd category of gatherings are only attended by the Thabitids, the Haggids, Schuon and Badriyah and sometimes the Alids. There may be others added now such as the Qassimids. These are completely naked and the dances are more suggestive, Balinese or Hindu, and apparently there is more intimacy with Schuon, though as he is now impotent it does not go very far. I should add some of these dances are South American, performed in a bizarre South American costume of parrot feathers.

There are many different dances, but only three that Schuon seems to particularly enjoy. In the first of these with the large drum in the background and the tariqa Indian singers (S. Ughbah; S. Qassim, S. Hamdun, and S. Abdul Kafi) singing Indian songs; Schuon with genitals exposed, goes into the center of the Indian Lodge. The women circle around him clockwise, shoulder to shoulder. From the center towards the periphery, Schuon goes up to each woman in turn and gives them a kind of embrace, pressing his chest and stomach against the breasts and abdomen of the women. In another dance he puts his hands around their hips and backsides. In yet another dance, he sits on his bench to the side of a lodge and as the women circle the lodge, each woman as she approaches a few feet from Schuon, directly in front of him, stops and does a 360 degree turn, giving him an opportunity to look each woman up and down back and front.

There are other dances; both men and women's war dances, Fitzgerald's eagle dance, Sa. Badriyah and Sa. Latifah dancing, but as far as Schuon is concerned, it is the contact with women that he loves. Once when there was a first category of gathering, where the women are covered, I saw

Schuon was quite bored. I asked Sa. Amīnah about this and she said, "he needs pure esoterism in order to live." Pure esoterism is naked women.

The metaphysical concepts Schuon uses to justify this practice I learned from questioning Sa. Amīnah after her visits with him. He invented these justifications after the gatherings were already established. The Principle is: Atma (Schuon) becomes maya (the naked women) in order that the naked women (maya) may become Schuon (Atma). Alternately, the center becomes the periphery in order that the periphery may become the center. "God becomes man in order that man could become God." The reader will recognize these formulations as central to Schuon's doctrine. The primordial gatherings are thus the quintessential expression of the doctrine.

Quite clearly this is a rite, though Schuon dissimulates this idea, since he doesn't wish to be accused of syncretism. However, all the elements of a rite are present. Schuon's body is like the Eucharist, the women are the receptive souls awaiting his naked body. Sa. Amīnah said he compares this dance of his to the dance of Krishna with the Gopis (some Kangra miniatures picture this); to the Sun Dance - since the sun dancers go in and out from the center; and to the circumambulation of the Kaaba. This means clearly that Schuon sees himself as equal to Krishna (an avatara) to the Sun Dance Tree (who according to Black Elk, represents Wakan Tanka) and to the Kaaba, the most sacred object in all of Islam. These comparisons indicate the syncretic nature of the rite. Schuon has combined three religions - firstly himself as Islamic Shaykh - Krishna, - Kaaba, joining himself in an American Indian Dance, to naked women who are supposed to believe he is the Atma: Islam- Red Indian - Hindu. Schuon explains: this is the primordial religion; he is its only exalted exponent; in fact he himself IS esoterism; he is the Religio Perennis. This, of course, is really a completely new religion: Schuonism. As the Virgin blessed Schuon with her genitals and healed him of his distress, so also Schuon blesses these women with his body, healing them of all their illness. Since Schuon is both beyond the Law and infallible, he cannot be questioned about all of this. The problem is that no one is healed in this rite, because the rite manifests Schuon's own sickness. "Physician, heal thyself," said Christ.

There is another element of this rite I have not mentioned: the men have to watch; and it must be born in mind that nearly all these women are married to the men who are there. It is characteristic of Schuon that he has a kind of castration complex about other men. Schuon is hypersensitive about any male competition. It is not by mistake that both S. Qaddur and S. Abdul Ali are both ineffectual men, and at the same time, the two men who have the highest positions in the tariqa.

I hope it is not inappropriate to offer these interpretations, but it seems to me they are imposed by the facts. Moreover, if my interpretations are mistaken, at least I will have stimulated thought about who and what Frithjof Schuon really is, and this is my purpose.

I once asked Sa. Amīnah why Schuon only wishes to "heal" the women at these gatherings, and not the men; she said that he is a man and it would not be normal to embrace men. Yet, if his intention is not sexual, as is claimed, then why not give the same grace to men, assuming of course, men would want it. If a true gnostic, which Schuon claims to be, is someone beyond gender, then why be partial to women in these gatherings? If he is beyond concupiscence, as is also claimed, then his desire to heal others should not be restricted to the female gender. It is restricted to the female gender and therefore the motive is concupiscent.

Moreover, as Rama Coomaraswamy said, why did Schuon only choose Krishna's amorousness, if he would compare himself with Krishna, and not also hold a mountain on his fingertip as Krishna did.

Moreover, if it were the Virgin that had appeared to him, Schuon would not need 4 wives, nor need all the women at the gatherings. How, one might ask, could he be satisfied with merely human wives after the Blessed Virgin assuming that it was the Blessed Virgin?

Furthermore, one cannot reproduce Eden before the fall in this world unless all men are realized. It is irresponsible to seek to impose such a false Eden on fallen individuals, not to mention children, who could scarcely understand being embraced by an 84 year old naked man.

I went to 4 or 5 of these gatherings, and watched Schuon almost constantly, and he almost never takes his eyes off of the women's hips and breasts. To see Schuon at these gatherings it to see a naked 84 year old man pressing himself against even 12 and 14 year old girls. Finally, these gatherings must be rejected because they are disgusting, criminal and appalling. What he does to these young girls constitutes corruption of minors, child molestation and sexual abuse.

All this becomes even more abnormal when one knows that Schuon has all but abolished the magalis, that he allows Moslems to drink beer, that almost no one keeps the fast at Ramadan, etc. Schuon has abolished exoterism, orthodox form: he has become his own religion, his own law.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> In February 1991, if my memory serves, shortly after Schuon began the more complex form of primordial gathering, such as I described, he wrote an article called the *Liberating Passage*. This article stated many ideas I heard discussed when Sa. Amīnah would recount the conversations that occurred during her visits. Thus, I was able to see directly how Schuon's ideas get developed into articles, and how the ideas in his articles relate to his life. Thus, the notion that Schuon's books and articles are impersonal was belied. Schuon's whole life, his books, his art, constitute *A Play of Masks* which is the title of another recent article. Behind Schuon's masks, and his masks are his art, his books, his clothes, and even his nudity, there is no doubt a man with spiritual aspiration, but there is also a man who is enormously weak, even sick. He is a man who needs innumerable masks in order to live, and unlike other men, he is not content with a humble mask; it must be the mask of greatness and not just greatness, but prophethood, not just prophethood, but to



## OTHER VISIONS

TARA: Schuon was walking through an avenue of trees carrying a heavy rock, a tayumum, which represented to him the Law with which he was burdened. He dropped this rock, thus unburdening himself of the Law, which in Arabic is the Sharia. He came to a meadow. Across the meadow, coming towards him, was Tara, the Tibetan-Nepalese goddess, completely naked, and apparently without pubic hair. She came near to him and said "je ne pense plus" - "I do not think anymore." The "official version" ends here, but Sa. Amīnah told me that Schuon told her that at this point, having said she does not think, Tara took Schuon's hand and put his hand on her vagina. This vision reminds one of neo-zen wherein one does not think, - one only is -, and since there is only being and not thinking, anything is allowed.

This vision was taken by Schuon as permission by God that Schuon needed a third wife: Sa. Amīnah being this third wife. She was "married" to him in 1974. but as will be seen later, there was no marriage.

Each wife is considered by Schuon to carry their own divine message. The message of Sa. Amīnah is supposed to be not thinking; being; existentiality. This "not thinking" Sa Amīnah is however, not someone I know:

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be god Himself. What do the masks hide? Must Schuon pose himself in endless books, paintings and photographs because his realization is false?

In any case, nearly the whole of this article entitled *The Liberating Passage* is about Primordial Gatherings. The beginning of the essay defines what a rite is, despite the fact that he denies that the gatherings are rites. This denial is a diplomatic lie.

Elsewhere in this essay he says that "the body invites to adoration by its theomorphic form" and that "sexuality is that which bears witness to... the theomorphic form of the body," that is, normal sexuality. By this standard, the Primordial Gatherings are therefore sexual, since the women and Schuon are involved in an adoration that tends towards physical union without reaching it.

And then in an even more recent essay, this commentary on Schuon's own Primordial Gatherings continues: he says "the believers are like gopis dancing around Krishna and uniting with him...", and "the deified man has the function of motionless mover." and that the deified man "is the Divine symbol." And further that he is like the "Kaaba..." the Sundance tree, "the axis heaven earth" and then again, "the dance of the gopis." These essays will no doubt be eventually published, so I won't quote them more extensively, but they clearly demonstrate that Schuon sees himself as a "God-man." i.e., an Avatara, that the Primordial Gatherings are rites, and that their essential message is sexual, or sexuo-spiritual, or perhaps "tantric." (See Appendix II.)

which is to say that Schuon mythologizes even his personal relationships, and even his wives become, as it were, "the masks of God."

It is clear, as indicated earlier, that these visions of Schuon's are not real but projections of his own psychic needs. In 1974 Schuon, according to Sa. Amīnah was tired of the constant back-biting and arguing between Sa. Latifah and Sa. Hamidah, his first and second wives. She told me that Schuon was "bored" with Sa. Hamidah, whom he had "married" in 1965. She said that she, Sa. Amīnah, never gave Schuon any problems, always hid her faults, never asked for anything, and denied and sacrificed herself completely. Her relationship with him was "all obligations and no rights." She said that Sa. Latifah and Sa. Hamidah exposed their problems and faults to Schuon and this made him ill. She told me that the few times she manifested the slightest fault to Schuon, he got asthma, or some other psycho-somatic malady. Sa. Amīnah said "I was a peacemaker between Schuon and his family." She said that she felt she was a sacred prostitute, a "devadassi." She said that "He idealized me and I had a tremendous obligation to hide my faults." She told me she never loved him, but pretended to love him because he was so weak and helpless and needed femininity to "go on with his mission."

She said "he loved my light-heartedness, because Sa. Hamidah was so ponderous, mentalistic and symbolic." In regard to his sexual life with Sa. Latifah, a matter about which there is some dispute with others, Sa. Amīnah told me that Schuon thought her cold and that he would "rather have a cup of coffee" than be with Sa. Latifah. However, both Sa. Badriyah and Sa. Amīnah said that there were sexual relations of a limited kind between the two. I record this because apparently many have been told that this first marriage was a "pure marriage" (i.e., one in which there were no sexual relations). Of Sa. Hamidah she said that Schuon found Sa. Hamidah's love of the sexual position Schuon calls Yab-Yum, "boring." Yab-Yum is Schuon's adaptation of a Tibetan and tantric pose where the woman straddles the man's midsection while the man sits cross-legged.

When Sa. Amīnah would come to see Schuon for her "visit," she would be naked and would lie with him and he would say "no Aristotle here." Thus Schuon did not want "to think anymore" and the vision of Tara justified his psychic need of having yet another wife.

To show again the expedient nature of Schuon's visions: I was told, after Schuon had been informed of my "marriage" to Sa. Amīnah, that the women in the Tara vision was not Sa. Amīnah after all, but Sa. Badriyah, the fourth wife.

I should also add here that I spoke with Sa. M a few nights ago and she told me a version of the Tara vision which she heard from Schuon himself, without the "esoteric" ending, where it was not Tara, but the Blessed Virgin who



said, "I do not think anymore." Sa. M however said that she was not sure her memory was correct.

PROPHETS: In Schuon's first Khalwah, or spiritual retreat, he had a vision of all the prophets including the Buddha.

PTE-SAN-WIN: This is the Buffalo Cow Woman of the Sioux who brought the sacred pipe to the Indians - Sa. Amīnah said "the Pte-san-win was in a Mihrab (of a mosque). She was naked and he rose up with her, embracing, into the air." This vision is especially telling as it mixes American Indian and Islamic elements, just as Schuon does. It was observed by Dr. Coomaraswamy that in the traditional story of Pte-san-win, the man who desired sexual union with her is reduced to ashes.

I would observe here also that Schuon's tendency to mix forms, especially Hindu, Islamic and American Indian, but also Christian forms (in icons) is nearly always a matter of mixing sacred traditional forms with some expression of his sexuality.

Sa. Kansa had a dream of Sa. Badriyah, as if she were the Pte-san-win who came to earth, naked, on a white horse, bringing her restoring "message" of sacred nudity to help the Indians. This dream of Sa. Kansa is not without relation to Schuon's fascination with the story of Lady Godiva, who rode naked on a horse. Sa. Badriyah found a post-card of Lady Godiva in a bookstore and Schuon made her go and buy all of them. Schuon believes Sa. Badriyah is an incarnation of the Pte-san-win. Yesterday I spoke with Mrs. Joseph Epes Brown and told her about Schuon's abuse of the Red Indian forms and rites, and she agreed with me that the Indians would find Schuon's use of the Pte-san-win abusive and blasphemous. Mrs. Brown expressed the opinion that Schuon must be sick in his mind.

KALI: This is recorded in Schuon's memoirs; A man like Ramakrishna turned into a beautiful version of Kali, naked, and embraced Schuon in some kind of sexual union and disappeared into his chest. Sa. Amīnah said that it is because of this vision that Schuon says, many times each day, "Hari Om." She said he even says this in restaurants next to the waiter, to the embarrassment of those present. This Hindu mantra, Hari Om, is also written on the Lalla Yogashvari paintings. In the most "esoteric" of these, the mantra appears above the spread legs of the goddess.

A few more details in regard to Schuon's mixing of forms:

1) the Islamic divine name is recited at the Primordial Gatherings to the accompaniment of the Red Indian drum, the rite in Islam is called the Hadra (dance), but the melody of the song is American Indian, as are the costumes of the fuqara.

2) The Virgin Mary is painted as a Hindu Goddess, as the "Queen of Sheeba" (the title of one painting), as Layla, the Islamic heroine and Sufi Beatrice. There is one painting by Schuon of the Virgin with tepees behind her.

3) Schuon used to smoke the Sacred Pipe in a ritual manner.

4) He has invented various tantric-sexual modes or ritual invocations to be used while making love or used naked with a man and woman, or a group of women which mix Islamic, Hindu and Tibetan Buddhist elements.

### SCHUON AND PORNOGRAPHY

There are three stories that Sa. Amīnah told me that I previously neglected to record. They are as follows:

She told me that she used to buy Playboy magazines for Schuon. Once, when they were looking through one of these and were naked together, they came to a photo sequence in which a devil with a tail and a spear or pitchfork was attacking a nude woman. Schuon got asthmatic on seeing this image; and threw out the magazine. He said they should pray about it: they did. Schuon then took the magazine out of the trash, ripped out the offending pictures and kept the rest to add to his collection of photos of nude women.

Another story she told me is that when Schuon was a young man at the textile design place where he worked in Paris, he was taken by some of his fellow workers to a place where all the waitresses were completely nude. Sa. Amīnah said that Schuon loved this place and this experience.

This spring, thinking of Schuon's birthday coming up on June 18th, she asked me if I could call my friend Scott who works in a bookstore in Berkeley California and ask him to find a book, preferably of Far Eastern women, completely nude, but tasteful. She explained that Schuon's taste in this sort of thing (the word pornography is not one Sa Amīnah would use, but this is what it

amounts to) is not considered as low, but rather as a matter of seeing the Archetype in the form.

May  
Another story of this kind I will record is that Sa. Amīnah told me Schuon was fascinated with the story in the Koran (Sura 27:44) where the Queen of Sheeba enters the Palace of Solomon. In this story the Queen of Sheeba mistakes a highly polished floor for water and therefore lifts her skirts to walk on it. Schuon said to Sa. Amīnah that Solomon polished these floors so that he could see up between the legs of the Queen of Sheeba. If one reads this passage, one sees it has to do with the possible illusions one can have in life, and that things may not be as they seem. This realization turned the Queen of Sheeba to Islam. Schuon's interpretation is really very low. If Solomon was a wise man he would not need to resort to such voyeurism.

One of Schuon's favorite jokes is based on the similarity of sound between the French Saint and sein (meaning woman's breast). There is a french saying that there are so many saints in France (historically) that one can choose whatever saint one likes. The parallel with sein is obvious.

I conclude this section by recording that Schuon has thousands of nude pictures, especially of Sa. Badriyah, but also of his other wives. Moreover, Schuon's delight in nude photos of women is known in the inner circle. S. Abdul Latif had a "crush" on one of his employees at Perennial Designs and managed to talk her into posing for nude photographs. These photos were given to Schuon. I will speak more of this later. The woman's name was Shirley..... ~~I do not remember her last name~~

## SCHUON'S PSYCHOLOGICAL STATE AND HEALTH CONDITION

I refer the reader to Schuon's Memoirs on the subject of his psychology because there it is clear that he has always been prone to feeling persecuted, misunderstood, bitter, suffering to the point of death, and so on. I quote a few phrases almost at random: "suffering grievously both in soul and body" (page 1). "I was terribly misunderstood and oppressed... They wanted to make of me something I hated and despised" (page 1). "I fell ill in body and soul, became melancholy and bitter, and had difficulties with my breathing" (page 4). "I reel through the town with bewildered senses: each step a murder, each breath a cry, each glance a night" (page 31). "hours of sudden bitterness came, when I seem to myself a God on a treadmill" (page 33). "I never knew where the frontier lay between my habitual and inevitable dissimulation and unaccustomed, yet spiritually necessary genuineness" (page 50). This sentence is interesting since it points to Schuon's tendency to lie and dissimulate. This will be discussed later.

S. Badriyah, who used to be a masseuse at a health resort, learned from a chiropractor in Bloomington by the name of Lucinda Jordan, of a supposed psychic gift of healing in her hands. With this supposed gift she claims to be able to feel any part of the body of Schuon and determine his medical condition.

I gathered, over the course of a year, through Sa. Amīnah a picture of Schuon that leads me to believe that he has been neurotically sick and constantly pampered, not just in old age, but throughout most if not all of his life. Moreover, he has always blamed his sickness on others, or on "causes of a moral order" (page 1 of *Sacred Nudity*), bad disciples, or the difficulty of being an Avatara in this profane age.

I cite a few examples: he recently was sick for an entire day over a letter he got from S. Abu Bakr concerning whether or not Ophelia in Shakespear's *Hamlet* had a good fate after death.

Sa. Amīnah once said to him that a woman who worked with her in her office in Geneva (Switz.) was a kind of "profane saint." This was said at the dinner table in Schuon's house. Schuon turned white as a sheet and left the room ill and asthmatic, telling Sa. Latifah to speak to Sa. Amīnah. Sa. Amīnah was thereupon given a lecture on not saying such absurd contradictory things as "profane saint" because "such inconsistencies make Schuon sick." Schuon was sick for quite a while due to this.

My most personal experience of Schuon's psycho-physical illnesses is the following: Some months after I was informed that I was not married to Sa. Amīnah - it was Feb. or March, I was concerned because the "permission" I had been given to be with her lacked a sacramental, and hence a sacred basis. The effect of this was to make me feel that my love for her was less profound, more trivial, or more sexual, without the aspect of spiritual union. I was told that his recently acquired psychic gift of intuiting people's states and attitudes at a distance, especially that of Sa. Badriyah, had been activated in regard to me. I was told he was "worried about my desire for sacramentalization" and "felt a pressure from my relationship" with Sa Amīnah. Moreover, I was told that "he felt poisoned by my faults" and was indignant because of my ungratefulness and that he was being "purified after being exposed to my faults" as well as those of other people he was upset with. I was told that he was violently sick because of me and these other matters and had thrown up into the toilet for most of the day. My supposed ungratefulness and other matters had caused him to vomit bile. Sa. Amīnah said that she didn't want to tell me this fact because it was "disobliging to the Shaykh." She told me about the vomiting only because of my persistent questioning.

"I was from the beginning a person different from the others... I realized I am not a man like other men."

There are moreover many references in the *Memoirs* to his feeling he is going mad. And on another subject, one sees that Schuon's view of women is selfish and narcissistic as for instance when he says of Madelaine (his first love) "I felt her faith in me would heal my soul."

These quotes could be multiplied but I don't wish to be exhaustive. Schuon's psychosomatic illnesses are an endless subject and are closely related to his reclusiveness. He is, in fact, an extremely delicate, weak, and neurotic man, who falls ill at the slightest insult, irregularity or impropriety. He uses his illness as a means of emotionally blackmailing other people: therefore, he is constantly humored, pampered, and babied, especially by his wives.

His house in the winter is kept at a constant 80 degrees since the slightest chill provokes his asthma. Sa. M. said that even the thought that he might be chilled can cause him to have an asthma attack. Sa. Amīnah told me that during their visit to New York city to see museums that the wives were exhausted trying to keep scarves and coats wrapped around him, putting him in and out of taxis, keeping his very sensitive nose covered. Sa. M. said that Schuon is extremely difficult to travel with; that he is irritable and complains.

He denies for himself all western medicine on the grounds that the prophet could not submit his sacred body to the indignities of western medicine.

Sa. Amīnah said that they keep secret Schuon's medical condition because the "enemies" of Schuon could profit from such information by saying that the "primordial" and Indian" dimensions of the tariqa could be blamed on senility. If I may be allowed a personal comment here, the problem lies, not in senility, but in his psycho-pathology.

Dr. Coomaraswamy knows more about Schuon's medical condition than I do. He states that Schuon has had "transient ischemic attacks." He constantly complains of a heavy head; cannot follow causal arguments or tolerate hearing "lists of things," becomes quickly pale, asthmatic and is prone to vomiting. I have heard at least ten times in the last year that he is in danger of having a stroke, or has had or will have a minor heart attack. He lies down a great deal of the time. Those around him treat him with homeopathic medicines, even though they have absolutely no training in this most dubious field of medicine.

It was only very recently that I understood what actually happened on this occasion. What I now understand is this: Schuon's primary interest in Sa. Amīnah was having power over her, that is, possessing her, not as a man normally possesses his wife or the wife her husband, but rather through a kind of psychic possession of her soul. My being told that Schuon could psychically read my state of mind and that my ungratefulness caused his vomiting were means, through a kind of blackmail, to get control of my relationship with Sa. Amīnah. He felt that he even had the right to control the particulars of my sexual relationship with her and dictate what I could and couldn't do. What I could not understand then was why I should be grateful to him when she had not come to me from him - rather she had come to me of herself because Schuon had neglected her as a wife for four years. Why should I be grateful to him for the loss of the woman I loved, when she herself, and not him, had insisted that I possess her and insisted that we were married. It's only recently that I came to understand this twisted demand for gratefulness, and that undeserved and unconditional gratefulness and mind control of all kinds, political and pseudo-religious is characteristic of cults and cult-leaders.

I should add that at this time he wrote a text called *Piety, Gratitude, Trust* in which there was a message for me - that I should be grateful for what I had and not mourn the loss of what I didn't have, and then a message for Sa. Amīnah, that punishment is due to those who commit an injustice and not to those who suffer from it. From this I learned how cunning and indeed frighteningly clever this man can be. Moreover, I learned how self-serving and narcissistic are his spiritual opinions and many of his texts.<sup>5</sup>

## PROPHECY AND MARRIAGE

Around this time, because of his having vomited, I was more or less forced, or more exactly "encouraged" to write him a letter of apology for being ungrateful. In this letter I was told to say that my idealism regarding spiritual and romantic union was a "false mystical idealism." I could not see how my desire for spiritual and sexual union with Sa. Amīnah who I had thought of as my wife, could be false mystical idealism, when his own relationship with her for the last four years had convinced her that she was no longer married to him. It seemed to me that he was holding onto a wife for the sake of a principle, not for

<sup>5</sup> One story I forgot to mention, told to me by Sa. M, is this: Schuon and the Abdul Quayumids were in Morocco in 1975. Sa. Amīnah in Switzerland had gone to a doctor to explain to him about Schuon's health and made an appointment for Schuon to see the doctor. She had written to Sa. Latifah a letter in Morocco telling her this. Schuon saw the letter and became violently ill at the thought of going to a doctor. Schuon became so sick he said he might die. Sa. M. was astonished that a man claiming to be spiritual would become so afraid of seeing a doctor (because seeing a doctor meant he might die) that just the thought of this would make him so afraid that he thought he might die of fear. This is neurotic, to say the least. A spiritual man does not look on death in this way.



the sake of his wife. What this principle was, and is now, only slowly became apparent.

The principle at stake, in the words of Sa. Badriyah, and confirmed by Sa. Hamidah is this: "the family of the Bodhisattva is inviolate." Sa. Hamidah had said to me that the wives of the prophet could not marry any other man, both during the prophet's life and after his death. Sa. Badriyah during one of her many intensely critical demagogic sessions with Sa. Amīnah said to her "you haven't the right to love anyone else but the Shaykh." Both Sa. Amīnah and Sa. Hamidah said to me that the Shaykh cites Sura 33 of the Koran in support of his right to demand total loyalty from his wives. One passage from this surah that indicates this is 33:53. No one can "marry his widows after him (the prophet) at any time. Truly such a thing is in God's sight an enormity."

The fact that he feels he has the right to demand that "the wives of the prophet cannot remarry" is yet another indication that he thinks of himself as a prophet, and not only this, but the equal of Mohammed since the Koran specifies that only the prophet has such rights. This chapter in the Koran also says that the prophet, unlike any other man, may neglect or not neglect his wife as he chooses. Sa. Amīnah very often said to me that "a woman married to Schuon "has no rights, but only obligations." Sa. Hamidah put this concept more mildly when she said to me that the wives are "obligated to prefer him and his welfare to our own." Sa. Amīnah said that "a woman is there for him; he is not there for them." Thus the wives take off and put on his shoes; they dress and undress him; put on his coats and wrap him in scarves, comfort his ego, always indignant over how he is maltreated by the modern world and by his disciples. Sa. Amīnah has explained to me how often Schuon doubts himself, and how she must tell him he is a prophet and a great man, how good his body looks, and how wonderful he looks naked; how he is an avatara; the greatest painter in the world; they even lie to him about the small sale of his books so that he believes himself world famous, his books selling widely. She said he is very much attached to the idea of his own fame.

Schuon's comportment and his treatment of his pampering wives has made me think of him as a kind of parody of a king - a sort of decadent Abraham or Solomon, or again, a neo-Hindu sultan. Sometimes looking at him I have thought of Louis XIV combined with Oscar Wilde or Charles Baudelaire.

She said that her sexual life with Schuon was one sided and that except for a few times at the beginning, he never satisfied her. One day, early in our relationship, she calculated that she had sexually satisfied him with oral sex 3 times a week for 10-12 years, at least 1500 times. "All obligations, no rights." She said she felt she was his "spiritual concubine."

She said "he is always feeling alone" because no one is as high, spiritual and profound as he is. She said that "he represents pure discrimination,"

and that because his discrimination is prophetic, as he embodies the divine intellect, that he needs femininity as a consolation. She said "he deserves all the women that he wants." She compared Sa. Badriyah to Abishagh the <sup>husk</sup> Shunnamite, the beautiful naked young girl that was put into the bed of the prophet David in order to warm him in his old age. She said that any man should be willing, like Uriah the Hittite, to sacrifice his wife, to give her as a gift to Schuon and be willing if necessary, to die for him, as Uriah did, who she said, "certainly went to heaven as a martyr."

Sa. Amīnah said he is always doubting his function, whether he is a Shaykh or a good Shaykh, or whether his disciples are worthy of all he gives them. She said he always thinks a disciple will turn against him and needs to be comforted that such and such a disciple loves him. This is why so many letters of love or apology are always being written to Schuon by the fuqara. It is made abundantly clear by Sa. Badriyah and others that Schuon needs perpetual love and encouragement. Sa. Amīnah said that there have been many times when he has threatened to dissolve the tariqa because of unworthy disciples. Or, he threatens to take away the "grace" of the Primordial Gatherings, because of some "histoire" or problem in the tariqa. I think I already mentioned that Schuon threatened to take away the Primordial Gatherings because he saw photos of himself and his vanity was wounded. This use of threats; the threat of getting sick; the threat of making him sick; the threat of withdrawing something if Schuon's need for love and adulation is not petted and coddled; all this is quite typical.

The wives have the primary function of sustaining and bolstering his ever deflating ego. Sa. Amīnah told me a story where she, Schuon and Sa. Badriyah were at lunch with others and Sa. Amīnah saw her cat had gotten in a fight outside, and as her cat was a weak cat, she thought it might die; but she was forbidden to save the cat by Sa. Badriyah on the grounds that Schuon's peaceful lunch was more important than the death of her cat. Everything should be sacrificed for Schuon. I was once told that "you should wish to die rather than do anything that would harm the Shaykh." Examples of this attitude could be multiplied but perhaps the point has been made: Schuon is a cult leader who demands for himself all rights while he himself has no obligations except to radiate the extraordinary glory of his presence.

There is about Schuon something of a vain Dandy, rather like Baudelaire or Oscar Wilde, except that Schuon's dandyism adopts the mask of prophethood, variously being the Great Chief, the Great Shaykh, King of the Religions, and so on, where as Wilde or Baudelaire were only overdressed poets. Sa. Amīnah told me that Schuon often recites a French rhyme which in she rendered in English as:

"The world is round  
I am the King,  
And I don't know why."



The rhyme, I think, fell on "roi, quoi,... This poem is quintessential Schuon: feeling sorry for himself because he is such a misunderstood Avatara.

In regard to Schuon's vanity and dandyism, I should perhaps record that there is a man in the tariqa named S. Isa, who is indeed a powerful and impressive type, large strong, and perhaps also a bit of a dandy. In any case, this man was not allowed to continue going to Primordial Gatherings because Sa. Badriyah thought he was competing with Schuon. He wrote a quasi-love letter to Sa. Badriyah in which he claimed a certain realization, à la Schuon, regarding the sacredness of his body.

Sa. Amīnah told me that Schuon has never been happy with his male friends because no one is as high as he is. Leo Schaya, for instance, was devoted to Schuon, but Schuon had no affection for him. Even dead men, with the exception of perhaps Christ, Mohammed, Shankara and Plato, cannot compete with Schuon. At one point Sidi Abdul Quyyum told me that the Shaykh al Akbar, the Greatest Shaykh in history, was not Ibn A'rabi, but Frithjof Schuon. Sa. Amīnah said that "he prefers at the end of his life to be surrounded by women rather than men." What he demands of women is nothing less than worship and sacrifice, and he demands this even of other men's wives. But this is my opinion. To return to facts, Sa. Amīnah showed me a letter by Sidi Qassim in which Sidi Qassim said he felt himself to be an androgyne, half-woman-half-man, and that therefore part of him could love Schuon as if he were a gopi. This letter was accepted by Schuon as a "legitimate possibility." I thought it grotesque and wondered if one must have breasts and hips to attract Schuon's attention.

Someone recently asked me why Schuon needs to press himself against women in the Primordial Gatherings. I can only speculate on this subject. It seems to resolve itself into a question of power. As he says in a recent article, "divine virility is thrust upon us." I remember an occasion where Sa. Marifah was involved in a tariqa problem and Schuon and Sa. Badriyah thought her too legalistic. So Schuon, in a primordial costume, unexpectedly pressed himself against her in order to press home the point that she should be more existential. The effect was to give her a "grace" - and the grace was submission to Schuon's supremacy, since he alone is infallible and his body is as it were the body of truth.

Sa. Badriyah once tried to tell me that Schuon is without passion and that his interest in women is purely contemplative; but I knew already that this was largely false because Sa. Amīnah told me he was extremely passionate and that he always needed to be satisfied when with her. Sa. Amīnah said that Sa. Badriyah knows next to nothing about how Schuon used to be sexually. She said that it is only in the last 5 - 8 years that he has become impotent, due to old age. Schuon seems to see women as a mercy and consolation for himself and as he has become older he has needed this "mercy" more and more. Sa Amīnah said Schuon used to make her stand above him naked and then come down

putting her breasts on his face, while simultaneously saying "the Divine Feminine has descended upon you."

Given his age, this pressing of himself against many women satisfies what is left of his sexual need while, at the same time making him feel powerful. I hope this is sufficient answer to the question of why he needs to press himself against women. I should add however, for the sake of completeness, that Schuon's spiritual explanations of sexuality should be considered in conjunction with these facts and observations about him, and not apart from them, as only in this way can one see how Schuon's strange psychology and the world's highest metaphysics are made an amalgam in Schuon himself.

I have been asked to say something about the frequency of divorce around Schuon. This is not something I know very much about myself. However, following the drama of defections from Schuon in 1987 and the departure of Sidi Junayd, there were six divorces in fairly quick succession: these were the Thabitids, the Junayd's; the Isaids; the Yaqinids; the Talhahids; the Nuradinids. In many cases these divorces were nothing other than the switching of wives. Thus for example, Sa. Badriyah left her husband to "marry" the Shaykh, while her husband married the former wife of Sidi Junayd who was carrying on a notorious affair with a 13 year old girl, the daughter of yet another member of the tariqa. No doubt all these relations were complex, and I record these divorces only to indicate the destabilizing effect of the tariqa on marriages. It is pertinent that there is a Hadith of Mohammed to the effect that "God hates nothing more than divorce."

However, I do have personal knowledge of the effort of Schuon and Sa. Badriyah to undermine my relationship with Sa. Amīnah. Sa. Amīnah also told me that a psychologist was hired to prove to Sa. Malika that her husband was paranoid and what strategies she could use to get rid of him. Also, Sa. Amīnah told me that Sa. Kansa, among others, were consciously trying to draw S. Al Bashir's wife into the primordial dimension, in the hopes of either drawing Sidi Al Bashir in as well, or contributing to the destabilizing of their marriage. I was told more than once of the desire to expel Sidi Al Bashir from the tariqa because of his resistance, but I will speak of this later.

I should mention also that Schuon had some kind of sexual relationship or interest in the wife of Sidi Ibrahim, such that she suffered from this her whole life, and also I was told by the wife of another well known faqir that Schuon made sexual overtures to her when she was married to someone else. In this case there was a divorce that is ascribable to Schuon himself, but I cannot mention who this is as she wishes to remain anonymous. The tariqa, and specifically Sidi Junayd were instrumental in the divorce of Sidi Safwan, though again there were other factors.

## OTHER STORIES ABOUT MARRIAGE

There are a few other stories about Schuon and his trivialization of marriage. Sa. Amīnah told me Schuon tried hard to stop Leo Schaya's second marriage, but failed.

Another story is this: S. Abdul Latif, who owns Perennial Designs, a store in Bloomington, had a "crush" on an employee named Shirly W, and he took nude photos of her and in some of these photos Shirly appears nude with Abdul Latif's wife and his daughter Tamara. These pictures were given to Schuon as a gift, and Sa. Badriyah used them as models for her recent paintings of nude American Indian Goddesses. Schuon wanted the girl to enter the tariqa and Sa. Badriyah suggested that S. Siraj be deployed to attempt to date and marry the girl. Sa. Badriyah's reasoning for this was that Schuon could see her naked at the gatherings. Sa. Amīnah didn't agree with this proposal but unfortunately, not because the sacrament of marriage would thereby be trivialized to feed Schuon's need of nude women, but because she didn't like S. Siraj. I found out from Shirly W recently that S. Siraj never approached her. But the fact such an action was contemplated shows the expediency of Schuon's mentality; the trivialization of marriage, - and the double-standards that exist around Schuon, reflect his idea that all marriages are expandable except his own.

Though it may be somewhat out of place, I should add here that Tamara, the daughter of the Latifids, who I think is 18, has danced completely naked for Schuon during "musical evenings" held at her parents house. Her parents allow and encourage this. I know this from Sa. Amīnah, who witnessed these events.

Schuon told Sa. Amīnah that he prefers American Indian marriages, which he believes, wrongly, in fact, are freely dissolved and joined. Usually the clan system in tribes makes divorce relatively rare. However this may be, it is typical of Schuon to show dislike of formal religious rules, especially those which hinder his own freedom, just as it is difficult for him to keep his clothes on. But any religious rule that serves his expediency he holds to firmly. thus his own marriages can never be dissolved, even in the next world.

## DESPISING OTHERS

Sa. Amīnah told me, and I heard something similar from Sidi Abdul Ali, that Schuon has said that 3.4 of the world's population should be killed because they are profane. I should add here that nearly everyone outside the tariqa is called "profane."

When Dr. Wolfgang Smith visited Bloomington some time ago, he was rather shocked when he was told not to "bother talking to" an individual who had asked to speak to him, and who was not in the inner circle, because "he was not worthy of wasting one's time on."

Sa. Latifah said to me during an interview that Schuon would have killed all of the people in the so-called "Mafia" (those who separated from the tariqa in 1986-88), but that he couldn't do this because he lives in the west. Sa. Latifah said that if he lived in an Islamic country a hundred years ago, the Sultan would have killed all these people for him. Of the worst of these people, from the Bloomington point of view, Sidi Abdul Wahid, Sa. Latifah said that she wished she could slit his throat.

I heard from Sa. Mardiah that Sidi Abdul Ali has recently said that I should be killed. I record this not because I think it likely to happen, but because Sidi Abdul Ali is a man whom I cared for deeply, whom I took for walks because I felt sorry for him, whom I talked to because I thought he was lonely, and whose writing I encouraged, and for whom I found many books to help him with his studies. What is astonishing in Schuon's cult is the treacherous speed with which they turn against, vilify, and threaten those who offer the slightest criticism. Someone said to me recently that one of the signs of a cult is that it encourages a suppressing of doubts rather than addressing such doubts with compassion and understanding. Another sign is this siege mentality that is rather paranoid, where one vilifies, slanders, pronounces insane and even desires the death of someone for whom, a week before, one professed fondness or even love.

Another sign of a cult is the use of threats, such as saying that someone will go to hell, or deserves such and such a punishment. Schuon is a master at this kind of threat-psychology. Many times I saw Sa. Amīnah threatened with damnation until she proved her conformity. She was never allowed to defend herself for not feeling married to Schuon and when she tried, she was told that self-defense was pride.

Another characteristic of Schuon's cult, or rather of Schuon's own mentality is for him to say that so and so contracted such and such a disease because he betrayed Schuon: some examples are as follows:

1) Joseph Epes Brown has Alzheimer's disease because it is a disease of the brain; a disease which Schuon said Dr. Brown deserved because he betrayed Schuon. The reason why he betrayed Schuon that I've heard in Bloomington are that Mr. Brown was ambitious in the academic world; too mentalistic; not spiritual enough; led astray by his "bohemian" wife; didn't give Schuon credit from Mr. Brown's book, *The Sacred Pipe*, which he transcribed from Black Elk.

I talked with Mrs. Brown last week and she thought Schuon's supposition that Mr. Brown has a brain disease (in fact, he does not have Alzheimer's) as a divine punishment is cruel and malicious, as indeed it is. She also denied that Schuon was in any way responsible for *The Sacred Pipe*. I told her of the syncretic Primordial Gatherings and the Vision of the Virgin and she said her husband, if he were well, would be furious at such abuses. She said that the Indian rites continue legitimately among the Indians, and that I needn't worry that Schuon's travesties of the Indian rites and his books might eventually have a corrupting influence on the Indians.

2) Returning to the subject at hand: Schuon has said that Victor Danner died of cancer because of his having betrayed Schuon through pride and ambition. I will refer to this again later.

3) Schuon has said that Ramakrishna died of cancer because of his mistake in making Vivekananda his successor.

4) Sri Ramana Maharishi got cancer in his arm because of his effort to make his question "Who am I?" into an initiatic method was false, because the Maharishi's realization was personal and couldn't be disseminated. Also the Maharishi was wrong to have an excessive regard for the souls of animals - his pet cow for instance.

5) Sa. Amīnah told me that Leo Shaya's wife believed her husband died of a heart attack because of Schuon's merciless criticism of Schaya's last book. I add here, without any judgement, but only to record, that I've heard from two informed sources that Schuon slept with Schaya's wife while Schaya was in the same room. (Sa. Amīnah and another independent member of the tariqa said this.)

If I may express my own opinion in regard to these facts; it is God and not Schuon who alone has the right to say why someone has died in one way rather than another, and it is for God, not Schuon, to say what will be the posthumous state of any given individual. Schuon has said "I am not responsible for what happens to someone who does not listen to me" as if God had stationed himself next to Schuon's right hand ready to lop off the head of anyone who did not consider every word of Schuon equal to those of Christ!

It should be observed here that Schuon in his most recent essays, but also throughout his works, has been much concerned with determining the spiritual meaning of "Castes and Races." In his recent works he has above all been concerned with defining himself as the "Superior Man," the "Defied Man," the "Universal Man," and an "Avatara". I asked a question of him through Sa. Amīnah concerning his being an Avatara and he said he is not just a minor or major Avatara, but a new category that has never existed before. He represents



pure metaphysics, the primordial religion, the quintessence of all the religions. He is, moreover, in his own estimation, a hamsa (a Hindu term); one beyond caste. He subscribes to his own version of the late 19th century theories of race and physiognomy. He claims to be able to read a soul on the basis of physiognomy. These theories of physiognomy he has combined with the Hindu theory of castes, and through this he judges people. Sa. Amīnah said that a preponderance of his talk is on this subject, so much so that she was bored with it. She said that his judgements of people are often so bitter and damning that she would not repeat them. I have heard her repeat things he has said such as that S. Ughbah is a wimp and a worm, Sidi Hatim a low Vaisha (merchant caste), S. Abdul Latif is a Vaisha and a Jew besides and Jews are opportunistic social climbers, and so forth. One would like to know how much theories of caste and race entertained in Germany during the 1920's and 30's influenced Schuon.

One sees Schuon's tendency to despise others in many places of the Memoirs. I offer one example:

"One has a merciless eye for the animal like somnambulistic subjection of prattlers, who talk everything into water and fill up the world with their dull buzzing, babbling, stupidity. Already in my youth I was logical and timeless, like a drawn knife."

One doesn't know who Schuon is referring to here, but since 3/4 of the world's inhabitants deserve to be killed, this must be nearly everyone. This sentence contains spite, hatred and pride. The Spirit is not a "drawn knife." As Christ said, "Who soever exalteth himself shall be abased."

I should observe here that Schuon's theory of castes and races is not without relation to the European racist theories which were common at the turn of the last century and which found a degenerate form in Hitler's Master Race. Schuon's theory of the caste-race determines his judgements of people, both in and outside the tariqa, where people are mercilessly classified according to the Hindu theory: priestly type, warrior type; merchant type; manual laborer, casteless "chandala" - or according to the gnostic categories as pneumatic, psychic, and hylic.

Schuon's theories of race and caste constitute the practical application of his anthropology, and his anthropology defines both the political hierarchy of the tariqa which places Schuon at the top, and a theory of history which defines history as leading up to Schuon.

I cannot possibly describe here how Schuon's theories of caste and race, combined with his creation of a "new civilization" (as he calls his tariqa) combined with his politics and anthropology result in mind control, social manipulation and demagoguery. Suffice it to hope that those who have suffered



under the demagoguery of Sidi Junayd or Sa. Badriyah will know what I am speaking of.

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In what follows I will try to reflect, as faithfully as I can, the opinions I have heard expressed regarding various individuals. These opinions are in most cases Schuon's or originate with Schuon, since a great deal of his conversation is taken up with talk about people. Many have noticed the pettiness and back-biting of the Bloomington community, but it should be ~~that~~ stressed ~~that~~ through the medium of his "wives," Schuon is constantly "applying his discernment" as these "wives" would express it. Schuon's "discernment" is above all critical and derogatory. The opinions I will now relate are not my own but those of Schuon and his inner circle.

*Sayyid Hossein Naor*

SIDI HOSSIEN: Sidi Abdul Ali said that Sidi Hossien is too Islamic, an "average Sufi," a derogatory term in Schuon's usage (Schuon refers to Ibn A'rabi derogatorily as an "average sufi.") Sidi Abdul Ali said that Sidi Hossien is not capable of assimilating the pure esoterism of the religio perennis, as is proved by the bad arrangement of Schuon's *Selected Writings* (too much emphasis on Islam) and by the fact that Sidi Hossien opposed the publication of the proposed art book of Schuon's paintings on the grounds that they involved too much nudity).

I have heard every person whom I have seen come from Sidi Hossien to visit Schuon criticized for being unprepared for Schuon's esoterism or unqualified. Sidi Hossien is always blamed for this. Sa. Amīnah said that the only reason Schuon does not close the tariqa to Sidi Hossien is because Sidi Hossein is a powerful influence both in the academic and Islamic worlds.

Sidi Hossien is considered guilty of pride and ambition. The tariqa claims to have proof (from a woman in Arizona who was with Sidi Hossien, but separated from him to return to Schuon's group) that Sidi Hossien desires to be Schuon's successor.

Sidi Hossien is considered to be trying to ride on Schuon's coattails, deriving his own fame from Schuon's. Sidi Qassim said that just as Sidi Hossien tried to proselytize for the Shah of Iran, so he now seeks to proclaim Schuon's fame to exalt himself.

Sa. Amīnah said that Schuon considers that the invocation has not reached Sidi Hossein's heart and that therefore Sidi Hossein's knowledge of God is all in his head. When Sidi Hossien comes to Bloomington, Sa. Amīnah

enough told me that Schuon tried his best to avoid having to see him. He is considered "boring" - all he talks about is books and publications. Someone said that it is no wonder he had to have a pacemaker put in his heart since he is so ambitious and excessively busy.

*James p68*  
SIDI QADDUR: Sa. Amīnah said many times that Sidi Qaddur was being considered for Khalifah, (the head) to succeed Schuon after Schuon's death. This however was in question because Sidi Abdul Haqq and Sa. Badriyah thought ill of the fact that Sidi Qaddur was so passive towards his wife and could not bring himself to divorce her, something they attempted to encourage. Sidi Qaddur's wife, Sa. Halimah is considered infantile and to have caused many unnecessary problems in the tariqa. She is not invited to the Primordial Gatherings.

Sa. Amīnah told me of Sidi Qaddur's homosexual tendencies, but noted that they were under control. His absentmindedness, clumsiness and weakness in matters of doctrine are well known in the tariqa. He is obedient and unquestioning to all the wives. So much so that Dr. Coomaraswamy referred to him as a sycoophant. This is perhaps why he is considered as a candidate to be the next head of the tariqa. He is also one of the individuals who "interrogates" those who are thought to have deviated from obedience to the tariqa - interrogations which are so similar to those used by the KGB that in fact he and those who engage in such activities are familiarly referred to as the tariqa's KGB. Sa. Amīnah referred to him as a saint, and at another time said, "he is probably a saint," but it should be clear by now that these terms are used by Schuon and those around him as merely conveniences.

Sidi Qaddur's elaborate visions of the Blessed Virgin are carbon copies of Schuon's paintings and are of necessity just as false as those of Schuon. Indeed, those in the inner circle seem to be prone to having visions. Schuon himself said "heaven is not prolix" and these visions are certainly prolix. One must wonder at the nature of this psychic mythomania around Schuon that produces such bizarre and elaborate imagery in his followers.

One thing Sa. Amīnah told me about Schuon that I found most astonishing was this: he said that Sa. Halimah's vagina is so small because her mentality is infantile, having the mind of a 12-13 year old. I do not know how Schuon knows about the size of her vagina. I have heard many stories about this infantilism, but there is no reason to record them. This one comment of Schuon's shows well enough Schuon's derogatory and demeaning intelligence.

I should add that my personal experience of Sidi Qaddur has generally been good.

Markings

SIDI ABU BAKR: The opinion of Sidi Abu Bakr held in Bloomington, while somewhat better than that of Sidi Hossien, is also not very high. Sidi Abu Bakr is considered pedantic and stubborn. He is accused of not being ruthless or decisive enough, defending people who question Schuon and therefore of being too soft. Like Sidi Hossien, he is too Islamic. Schuon thought that Abu Bakr's book of poetry was "worthless." Schuon has said that his book on the life of *Mohammed* is redundant and unnecessary. Mr. Murray, Schuon's highest dignitary, has been writing a refutation of Sidi Abu Bakr's last book, *Symbol and Archetype*. The only book of his that ~~the~~ Schuon likes is the one about Shaykh Al Alawi.

Sa. Amīnah said that Schuon hates Sidi Abu Bakr's sentimentality. She said that she once talked with Sidi Abu Bakr's wife who bitterly complained of having had to pray behind him for the last 40 years because he is so sentimental. I rather doubt this story but it is typical of the backbiting that is standard fare in Bloomington.

7.12.1990 Last August (1990) I was able to have two interviews with Sidi Abu Bakr when he was in Bloomington for his yearly visit which usually lasts about a month. Sa. Amīnah told me that I was the only person in the "inner circle" who desired to speak with him and who had done so for any length of time or in any depth. Sidi Abu Bakr has always stayed in the home of Sidi Abdul Qayyum when he came to see Schuon, but this year Sa. Hamidah did not wish to have him in her house and he was told to stay somewhere else. Sa. Hamida said this was because her husband was not well, but this was not the reason, rather the inner circle tends to despise him. Sidi Abu Bakr did not seem to be aware that he was being rejected and insulted, and this is of course to his credit. During his visit last August, Schuon saw him only for a single lunch, or so I was told. Sa. Amīnah told me that Schuon bragged of having avoided further contact with him.

My own opinion of Sidi Abu Bakr is that he represents what is best of England. There is something in him that recalls the Ancient English and Irish mystics of Celtic times; something of Shakespeare or of John Scotus Erigena. His book on Mohammed moved me deeply and I like his book of poetry. He strikes one instantly as a saintly man full of faith, which is something one cannot say of Schuon. His assimilation of Sufism seems profound. The conversations I have had with him are among the best I have had in my entire life.

SIDI HASAN (GAI EATON): He is thought to have completely betrayed Schuon and therefore to be spiritually worthless. It is typical of the community in Bloomington that anything short of Guru Bhakti or unadulterated adulation of Schuon is a betrayal. This attitude comes from Schuon himself. I do not know Gai Eaton personally.

*Whitney Perry*

SIDI ABDUL QAYYUM: Schuon has called Sidi Abdul Qayyum a "madman." (Sidi Qayyum told me this himself.) According to Sa. Aminah, Sidi Abdul Qayyum has had a 10 to 12 year affair with Sa. Latifah. Sa. Aminah said that it was regularly consummated because Sa. Hamidah told her that Sidi Abdul Qayyum regularly did his grand ablution (done after intercourse) after he came home from his visit to Sa. Latifah. Sa. Latifah eventually rejected him because of his alcoholism. Sa. Aminah told me that Schuon had said to her that he had defined exactly what Sidi Abdul Qayyum and Sa. Latifah could do sexually. There could be no mixing of sexual fluids and no sexual penetration. 42

Sidi Abdul Qayyum is a lonely and isolated man. All the dignitaries of the tariqa hierarchy tell visitors and new comers that they should beware of Sidi Abdul Qayyum because he is an alcoholic, a man with a bad character, and a person who doesn't understand Schuon. I have rarely met anyone who is more loyal to Schuon despite all he knows about him.

He was Schuon's chauffeur for 20 years and he would be valuable as a source of information about the psychology of Schuon. For myself, I did not find him either a leader or especially competent. Rather he is essentially a kind and gentle man who follows others.

*Khalifah, Schuon's successor.*

SIDI ABDUL HAQQ (JESUS GARCIA): This individual has been off and on selected to be the ~~Halifa~~ *Halifa*. He currently lives in Louisville, Ky., with his wife. He had taken some completely nude pictures of his adolescent daughters, aged 14-15 and the roll of film had been developed in a public store. The store called the police as mandated by law when they saw the pictures and the parents were arrested for childhood pornography. They managed to escape conviction on the grounds that in Spain people normally take pictures of their pubescent daughters. Sidi Abdul Haqq is or was the Maqqadam for Spain.

SA. ZAINAB: This is Sidi Ibrahim's wife. Sa. X. told me that Schuon was in love with her and "treated her as a goddess" but then suddenly "dropped her." Sa. Zainab suffered from this all her life. This is all I know of her story.

*Victor Danner*

SIDI ABDUL JABBAR: When I first moved to Bloomington there were tariqa volleyball games at the house of Sidi Hossien Perry (the son of Sidi Abdul Qayyum and a member of the tariqa). Dr. Danner (Sidi Abdul Jabbar) would sometimes drive by and there would be a litany of mean and spiteful comments made about him.<sup>6</sup> Sidi Jabbar's story is a complex one and I can't treat of all its details here. For many years he functioned as Schuon's official representative (maqqadam) in Bloomington and was responsible for bringing many individuals into the tariqa who are still there. I have spoken with his wife twice recently and what is clear is that when Schuon moved to Bloomington he

6 Some South American visitors who were invited to play and who didn't know the game, wished to play soccer. They were told that Volleyball was a more sacred game because it was played with the hands rather than with the feet.

wanted Sidi Abdul Jabbar out of the way and that no matter how just Schuon's reasons may have been, the treatment Abdul Jabbar received from Schuon himself, and all the other fuqara that he had brought into the tariqa, was at best petty and mean. For reasons that are hard to explain, Sidi Abdul Jabbar remained loyal to Schuon and maintained, as many do, that there are "two Schuons": the one that wrote the books and used to be a good man, and the senile, sex-obsessed older Schuon.

Whatever happened that made Schuon take away Sidi Abdul Jabbar's position as maqqadam and Niab, there is no question but that Sidi Abdul Jabbar had many good qualities and died as a pious Moslem. Therefore, the refusal of all those in Schuon's circle to go to his funeral and the gloating happiness of those in Bloomington when he died is nothing short of monstrous. As already indicated, Sa. Amīnah said Schuon was glad he died and felt that his cancer was a divine punishment for his betrayal of Schuon. I personally witnessed the heartless meanness of the people in Bloomington with regard to Sidi Abdul Jabbar at the time of his death.

Sidi Abdul Jabbar's wife told me that she spoke with Sidi Alawi bendr Merad, the current leader of the Al-Alawi tariqa from which Schuon supposedly derives his initiatic filiation as Shaykh. She said "Sidi Alawi said that his Shaykh, Abba ben Tunes remembers that when Schuon was in Algeria, he approached Tunes and asked to be made a maqqadam and Shaykh. Tunes went to Al-Alawi who was on his death bed, and conveyed Schuon's request to him. Shaykh Al-Alawi said no, Schuon could not have permission for this."

Others have investigated this and it appears clear from at least three sources that Schuon received the initiation from Al-Alawi, but asked and was refused permission to become a teacher (Maqqadam or Shaykh). He subsequently reports in his *Memoirs* that he received the grace to become a Shaykh directly from God. He describes himself in his *Memoirs* as a "Shaykh al-Baraka." This is supported by the fact that in certain texts of Schuon's he criticizes both the hereditary and succession modes of becoming a Shaykh. He holds that the "*Shaykh al-Baraka*", the Shaykh made Shaykh by grace, (as is his status) is the highest possibility. Now it seems to me that if the issue had not been brought up to Shaykh Al-Alawi, it is possible that God might intervene to make a given individual a Shaykh directly. But once such a function has been refused through normal channels, it seems unlikely that God would then go around the normal channel and do this directly. Rather He would send Shaykh Al-Alawi or his successor a "dream" in which he would instruct him to make Schuon a Shaykh.

Dr. Nasr has said in regard to this issue that anyone who has received the initiation may himself initiate others and points to the fact that Mohammed appointed no maqqadams or shaykhs. This seems plausible but it does not change the fact that Schuon apparently has lied about his investiture as Maqqadam. There is nothing unusual in Schuon lying as I show elsewhere in this



book. It is clear in any case that Dr. Nasr is right concerning the "legal" possibility that Schuon can give initiations. But one must also conclude that such initiations are not valid because of Schuon, but because of God, since any initiate may do such. ON such legal questions, I defer to those more competent than myself. However, in regard to the subject of Schuon being a spiritual master, I would say that it is absolutely out of the question. My reasons are not legal but spiritual. He is not a Shaykh-al-barrakah as he claims because all the evidence of his life, doctrine and method point to the presumption of setting himself up as an Avatara. This cannot be admitted, to say the least. Moreover, the visions of the so-called Virgin are false, and thus the tariqa is not Mariamiah and the Primordial Gatherings are nothing but syncretistic parodies.

Given these facts, and I cannot but believe that these conclusions are facts, one must conclude that at the very least, the upper reaches of Schuon's method, that is to say the sixth and seventh themes, the Alchemy and the "tantric" dimensions, reflect deviant innovations on Schuon's part. Schuon's belief in his own divinity, the divinity of his body, and thus his "adoption" by the Virgin and the primordial gatherings all indicate a deviation that is not only legal and criminal, but also spiritual. This perforce brings into question both his doctrine and his method, as well as indicating that he could not possibly be a valid spiritual master. One does not need to prove that Schuon has falsely claimed to belong to the silsalah or lineage going back to Muhammed. One needs only to see that on the evidence of Schuon's abuses, that "the tree is known by its fruits," and one need not concern oneself with the roots therefore. I can only express the hope that someone one day will trace and explicate these errors more completely. I would only indicate that given the upper reaches of Schuon's method have led Schuon himself into real errors, that it is likely that the themes in general, while containing aspects that are truth, as they imitate the Buddhist paramitas, nevertheless contain aspects that are false. I say this because I am convinced that Schuon's understanding of the virtues which the themes claim to represent, is colored by his psychology. The third theme, for instance, that of Beauty and Peace, is colored by Schuon's own inordinate need of consolation through femininity. the spiritual "state" that is the third theme is pictured in his "Icons" of the Virgin. For myself, knowing what I know of Schuon's Virgins, I cannot but see a certain perfume of error in his formulations regarding this theme, but I do not make the mistake thereby of casting aspersion on Beauty and Peace in themselves. I reject Schuon's method because I do not wish to be always having to mentally separate Schuon's pathology from my spiritual practices. But all of this is my opinion and I leave others to decide for themselves. I only add here that a woman who left Schuon's group said, in regard to Schuon's person and method, that she does not want "schuon's esoteric "French pastry" but wants her religion to be simple "like bread."



## THE DREAM BOOK

There is a "dream book" compiled by Sa. Hamidah and Sa. Amīnah which preports to record the many dreams of fuqura relating to the function of the Shaykh (Schuon). But having myself seen how Schuon and his group hypocritically use dreams and visions to create a tariqa mythology, and having myself had "sacred dreams" involving Schuon, I cannot accept this "dream book" as having any authenticity or of providing evidence for his status as a Shaykh. *My "sacred dreams" about Schuon, I now know, reflected only my own aspirations while being false in regard to Schuon himself.*

I record all this to point to the fact that Schuon has very likely lied about his investiture as Shaykh. The question of whether he is still a valid *Shaykh al-Baraka* I leave to those more competent than myself such as Sidi Hossien Nasr to decide. This also makes me have doubts about the validity and efficacy of his initiations. Sa. Mariam tells me that she knows of two Shaykhs in other tariqas who do not think his initiations are valid. This is as it were a legal question and I do not feel qualified to say just what the truth is. However, spiritually, Schuon could not possibly be a spiritual master simply because the visions of the Virgin are pathological and the Primordial Gatherings syncretistic parodies. This however is my opinion and I leave other to decide for themselves.

CATHERINE SCHUON (Sa. Latifah): Six months ago (i.e., four months before leaving the tariqa) I told Mrs Schuon that I knew of her affair with Sidi Abdul Qayyum. She did not deny it. She told me further that when Schuon asked her to marry him, she was in love with a faqir who Sa. Amīnah told me was Sidi Fath-ad-din who in 1949 was in Lausanne with Schuon discussing the material had collected from Black Elk. Schuon's comment about his marriage to Catherine is interesting: he says, speaking of why he married her that "the thought that someone else might marry her was intolerable to me." (Pg. 147 of *Memoirs*.) Here again, as I indicated in the section entitled *Marriage and Prophecy*, Schuon's main concern with women is possession and power. The same concern is indicated by Schuon's need to minutely control the behavior of his adulterous wives, even to the point of dictating specific sexual instructions, as he did with me and Sidi Abdul Qayyum.

SA. HAMIDAH (The wife of Sidi Abdul Qayyum): I do not remember the details of how Schuon came to "marry" his second wife, except that I recall that it had some relation to the Great Vision of 1965, the same year Schuon took Sa. Hamidah. I recall that there were other "signs" and readings from the Koran, but I do not remember them.

However Sa. Amīnah a number of times discussed with me how Sa. Hamida had wanted to please Schuon by offering him her daughter, who Sa. Amīnah described as "the Shaykh's type." Sa. Amīnah told me Schuon was in love with this daughter and the young lady confirmed this when I spoke to her recently. She once asked Schuon "what do I represent for you?" and he

answered "you are the only woman I have loved along with Sa. Hamidah and Sa. Amīnah." It is well known in the tariqa that Schuon tried to seduce this girl, perhaps in exaggerated forms. However, what I know of Schuon's sexuality from Sa. Amīnah is that Schuon is not a Don Juan type; rather, he considers himself a prophet like Solomon or Krishna, whom all women should wish to worship, and in trying to seduce this young lady, he tried to give her the extraordinary grace of his body in hopes that she would be his fourth wife. This accords with all that Sa. Amīnah told me. However, the young lady said that she was repelled by the idea of an incestuous relationship with an old man she regarded as her father.

Schuon blamed Sa. Hamidah for the failure of these attempts since he himself could not possibly be blamed for anything. Sa. M. (the young lady in question) married a Moroccan named Mulay Rashid. This marriage resulted in two children.

After some years the marriage began to break up, and Mulay Rachid, having learned many of Schuon's sexual secrets, threatened to expose Schuon if there was a divorce. The "dignitaries" of the tariqa met and decided that Sa. M. must return to Mulay Rashid to protect Schuon's reputation. thus, Sa. M. had to sacrifice herself for Schuon; but she could no longer live with her former husband. During the subsequent divorce action in Bloomington, Mulay Rashid wanted custody of the children and once again threatened to expose Schuon. Once again Sa. M. was asked to sacrifice - this time her children - to preserve Schuon's reputation. Complete custody of the two children was given to Mulay Rashid. About a year ago, the son of Sa. M., still in Malay Rashid's custody, committed suicide. According to Sa. Amīnah, Schuon blamed Sa. M. and her mother for this, saying it was God's punishment of her for her refusal to become his fourth wife. It is my opinion that it is quite monstrous of Schuon to blame Sa. M. for the death of a son when she had already sacrificed so much to prevent anyone knowing of Schuon's promiscuous nature. Sa. M.'s mother was certainly wrong to encourage Sa. M. becoming Schuon's fourth wife, but it is clear that Schuon himself wanted this, and thus all the trouble came from Schuon's own overweening self-interestedness. Sa. M. is a victim and so is her son, and may God give peace to his young soul. Sa. M. left Bloomington and the tariqa after this.

There are other aspects to this story I shall leave out, but I will mention one detail. In 1975 Sa. Hamidah and Sa. Amīnah were exploring sexual possibilities with Schuon, whereby Schuon would make love to the two of them while invoking. Sa. Hamidah asked Sa. M. to take pictures of the three of them during these acts. Sa. M. did not want to do this and circumstances made it possible for her to avoid doing so. Schuon himself accordingly took pictures of Sa. Hamidah and Sa. Amīnah naked and breast to breast, one of which I possess.

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48 | SIDI JUNAYD: Having only met Sidi Junayd once, all my knowledge of him comes from Sa. Amīnah and Sidi Salim, the step-father of Jasmine Gaetani, the 13-14 year old girl (now 17-18) with whom Sidi Junayd had relations even though he was married to someone else.

| Sa. Amīnah told me that Sidi Junayd had a history of pedophilia, and that there were two young girls he had pursued before seducing Jasmine. I do not recall the details of these stories, but to the best of my memory, they both occurred in Bloomington.

| Sidi Junayd (about the age of 40) was married to Sa. Batinah and was in the habit of taking young children out on boat or camping trips. He became particularly attracted to the 13 year old Jasmine in 1986 or 87. Sa. Amīnah said that Junayd was bored with his wife, and towards the climax of this entire affair would sometimes physically beat Sa. Batinah. Sidi Junayd's involvement with Jasmine became known early on to Schuon and Schuon gave his permission for Junayd to pursue it providing he was discrete and that he did not take the girl's virginity until she was of age. Schuon did this despite the fact that the girl's mother appealed to Schuon to put an end to the affair. Sa. Amīnah and others also warned him not to have intercourse with the girl. Schuon however did give his approval to the restricted sexual relations with the girl. Sidi Junayd did not obey the two conditions Schuon had laid down, namely not to have intercourse and to be discrete. Sidi Junayd was seen with the child more than once in a boat on Lake Monroe by other fuqara. He would also, according to Sidi Salim, appear at the Gaetani house to the discomfort and embarrassment of Jasmine's parents. The girl Jasmine would manage to slip out and be with Sidi Junayd in clear cut disobedience to her mother. Schuon still did not end the relationship with Jasmine and allowed it to continue for many months, despite complaints of her parents and other fuqara, because at that time Sidi Junayd was the leading muqqadam of Bloomington and Schuon's right hand man. Also, at the time, Schuon did not wish to have the hierarchy of the tariqa discredited because this period was the period when many dissenting voices were complaining about S. Junayd's "reign of terror" in Bloomington. As always, one must "protect the hierarchy."

(Sidi Junayd has also reputed to have had various visions. At one time he felt the movie Star Wars was a metaphysical presentation of the forces of good and evil, and "encouraged" all the fuqara to see it and its sequels.)

Sidi Junayd had a great deal of power because of his closeness to Schuon and often used it in a most destructive manner as in the case of Sidi Safwan which resulted in the break up of his marriage and the need to commit his wife for psychiatric care. Sa. Amīnah and Sa. Latifah both told me that Schuon fully approved of Sidi Junayd's autocratic and rather tyrannical methods and that Schuon would be harder and tougher himself if he lived in an earlier age when greater "rigor," justice and "holy anger" could be freely exercised. From all that I've heard, I do not believe Schuon had any moral objections to Junayd's

statutory rape of Jasmine; as esoterism is "amoral" and the essential element in Schuon's amorality is discretion or secrecy. Junayd's fault was to be indiscreet. I am familiar with this doctrine by direct experience as I was allowed sexual permission with Schuon's supposed wife, Sa. Amīnah until I announced to Sa. Suad that I had been married to Sa. Amīnah, at which time the boom was lowered upon me. (See The Problem of Qualification in *Logic and Transcendence* for Schuon's doctrine of intrinsic morality.) My telling Sa. Suad constituted a breach against esoterism, and esoterism and Schuon are one and the same thing in practice. In other words my "sin" was to announce that I had been married, so I thought, to Sa. Amīnah, and this was "disobliging to the Shaykh." So likewise, Schuon did not stop Sidi Junayd from continuing his sexual relations with a 13-14 year old girl until his indiscretions become so well known that Schuon was obliged to adopt a moral attitude. Schuon only did this and only disposed of Sidi Junayd when his own reputation began to be implicated in the scandal. At this point, two years ago, Sa. Amīnah, who had been working herself for some two years to get rid of Sidi Junayd, threatened him with the legal charge of statutory rape if he (S. Junayd) did not leave the state. Accordingly, Sidi Junayd left for San Diego, California where he is living with yet another faqir and studying homeopathic medicine and acupuncture. (He and this other faqir have subsequently split up.) I should add that it the observation of this writer that Sa. Latifah was in love with S. Junayd. I do not know if it was mutual. Sa. Latifah told me that the tariqa gave Junayd upwards of a half million dollars.

It should be added that Sidi Junayd moved there with the expectation that he would be able to marry Jasmine when she turned 18. But, Sa. Kansa and others "worked on" Jasmine and talked her out of marrying Sidi Junayd. For this, Sa. Badriyah rewarded Jasmine with permission to come to the Primordial Gatherings (she is 18), and I hear she was recently given a car. I mention these last details to show how the women in the tariqa such as Sa. Kansa manipulate and scheme, and how the tariqa gives rewards to those who conform.

I should also add that Sa. Amīnah acted as "house psychologist" in this and other situations despite lack of any real training, and that she had this function in the tariqa by permission of Schuon. Sa. Amīnah diagnosed Sidi Junayd as having some form of psychopathic narcissistic infantilism, like his sister Sa. Halimah, but I don't remember the exact term. She also diagnosed Sidi Siraj as having some personality disorder. She said Sidi Nuraddin has paranoid tendencies as does Sa. Kamila, his sister. Sidi Abdul Wahid is a paranoiac, which she explained is much worse than paranoia pure and simple. I know very little about this subject and offer these diagnoses to indicate how willing the tariqa is to employ arm chair psychology to label and stigmatize individuals, since all of the people mentioned above have either left Schuon's group, or Schuon group would like them to leave. One knows that this sort of psychological blacklisting was common in Russia under communist rule, as well as in other tyrannical institutions, either cultic, religious or political. On this matter as on others I defer to Dr. Coomaraswamy who originally suggested to me that the credibility of the diagnostic skills of the tariqa are questionable at best. (As

previously noted, the members of the inner circle of the tariqa are very suspicious of modern medicine and tend to rely on homeopathic forms of treatment. In fact, several of the inner circle practice homeopathy even though their training is limited to what they have read in a few books.)

## SCHUON AND CHILDREN

Schuon has written a whole article on holy childhood (*Reflections on Naivete in Light on the Ancient Worlds*) and often mentions the subject in other articles. But unlike Christ, who loved actual children, the only child Schuon has shown evidence of loving is the child in himself. I was told by Sa. Amīnah both when she showed me his childlike cartoons and his toybox, that this aspect of Schuon is the most esoteric part of him, but that no one should know about it since it would take away from his dignity.

Schuon's toy-box is in his "treasure room" and is full of stuffed animals which he sometimes plays with. He also has collections of marbles and other objects that a celestial child might have (little golden daggers, clear marbles, dolls, etc.,) The collection of toy animals is spread out across the table in the kitchen to greet him for breakfast (I do not remember if perhaps this is done only on Christmas or his birthday.)

In contrast, Schuon is opposed in no uncertain terms to the fuqara having children. Sa. Amīnah said that the only reason Schuon did not consummate his marriage with Sa. Latifah was his fear of having children. The Second and Third wives had operations to obviate this problem. Sa. Kansa had children, but Schuon was opposed to this, and often says it was a mistake. Sa. Kansa was recently reproached because her four year old girl waved to Schuon when Schuon passed by in a car (he sits in the back seat like a King with Sa. Badriyah driving in the front.) Sa. Kansa was told to reproach her child for treating Schuon with insufficient dignity.

The reasons why Schuon states he does not want the fuqara to have children are because they are too expensive, the profane world is too profane, educational systems are awful, and they distract parents from the spiritual life. As a result of his attitude many fuqara who would have liked to have had children refrained from doing so. A young woman close to Sa. Latifah who married a tariqa member was encouraged and agreed to have her tubes tied prior to the marriage. This couple has since suffered greatly because of this. They have also left the tariqa and must accept the fact that their marriage will be without children.



While some of Schuon's cartoons are quite humorous, they are nevertheless strange in that he always pictures himself as a 3 feet tall, fat, square man with a beret on, and always seen from behind. The other people in the cartoons are more or less normal sized.

In the visions of the Virgin, Schuon is nearly always a child, which indicates the infantile narcissism of these visions, since the visions are simultaneously sexual. I should add here that I am not a psychologist and I do not understand this need of Schuon's to see himself as the Christ-child, while at the same time he sexualizes the Blessed Virgin.

I once asked Sa. Amīnah why Schuon made love to her for ten years, but didn't satisfy her. She only satisfied him, and always orally. She said he preferred this, found intercourse "boring" with Sa. Hamidah, and, on another occasion said "he didn't know what to do with a woman." But all species "know what to do" in this circumstance. One can only conclude that Schuon's childish, selfish and narcissistic attitude towards sexuality corresponds to his psychology. What this psychology is I can't explain. Someone I mentioned these facts to observed that the two primary functions of woman's bodies, childbirth and intercourse, were of little or no interest to Schuon, and moreover that the almost exclusive emphasis on oral satisfaction is itself infantile.

Someone else observed that the absence of pubic hair on Schuon's pictures of the Virgin make the virgin look like a little girl before puberty. Schuon's own explanation of this fact is that the pubic hair represents the fall or the veil and that the vagina is the essence and therefore he prefers the removal of the hair. (Sa. Amīnah always had to shave her private parts for him.)

I do not interpret the above facts, but only record them as a part of the spiritual pathology I do not understand.

It must be observed however that the consequence of Schuon's psychology was first to allow Sidi Junayd a sexual relationship with a 13 year old girl and then to sexually abuse three girls, the two daughters of the Haqqids, the daughter of the Idrisids and to contribute to the corruption of a minor, namely the 14 year old son of the Kamalids, who witnesses the Primordial Gatherings. Jasmine I believe has also been molested by Schuon, as I witnessed her at the Primordial Gatherings, but I do not remember seeing the act itself.

Schuon's tendency to a narcissistic infantilism led to those crimes without my being able to define exactly how. In any case, when Christ said "suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven," he certainly did not mean taking possession of the bodies of young girls. If I may be allowed here a personal opinion; one absolutely cannot suffer such hypocrisy as this and one is obliged to speak out against it.



Lastly, in Schuon's essay *Reflections on Naivete* he explores among other things the difference between Naivete and holy childhood and cleverness, ingeniousness, hypocrisy, deceit and subterfuge. Now, I record here, my own opinion, which I believe to be factual, that nowhere in my life have I encountered so much subterfuge, lying, cunning ingeniousness, deceit and hypocrisy as in Schuon and his inner circle of fuqura. Schuon's crime is a crime against childhood, against the Christ-child, as well as against the Blessed Virgin; and this double crime can only be interpreted as constituting the sin against the Holy Ghost.<sup>7</sup>

Also in this section on children I should include a few things about Sa. Kansa. I have been told that she has her children, a 4 year old girl and a 2 year old boy, pray to a painting of Schuon with his penis exposed. Moreover, Sa. Kansa's house is full of paintings with vaginas and penises exposed. Sa. Amīnah told me Sa. Kansa does not love her husband, but is "completely in love with the Shaykh." She loves "primordially" and is a confidant of Sa. Badriyah. She is another one who is supposed to be a "saint."

SA. SUAD: Sa. Suad told Sa. Amīnah in an interview that she dreamed that Schuon put his tongue in her mouth. From thenceforth she could sing like an American Indian. Thereupon Sa. Suad was made leader of the Red Indian singing group that sings during Primordial Gatherings. Along with Sa. Badriyah and S. Kamaladin, she was made an "Indian dignitary" which effectively replaced the "Moslem dignitaries."

Sa. Badriyah, prone to jealousy as she is, had gone too far in having so many women take their clothes off for Schuon and thus, according to sa. Amīnah, asked of Schuon that she be kissed at the Primordial Gatherings, and that she alone be kissed. This I witnessed at one gathering. Subsequently, I saw Schuon kiss Sa. Suad as well, when Sa. Suad's husband was not present. I found this strange, since it implied a special election. Subsequently I often saw Sa. Suad's car at Sa. Badriyah's house when I knew Schuon to be there. I asked Sa. Amīnah if Sa. Suad had become a "shakti" of Schuon's. She said that she wouldn't be surprised, though she didn't think Schuon would marry another. Sa. Amīnah made it clear many women have been naked to please Schuon, or perform services for him. Her response to my questions made it clear that nothing would surprise her that Schuon might do.

<sup>7</sup> I should like to add that Sa. M. said that when Schuon saw her children, her daughter stroked Schuon's beard, but her son was not as interested - thus Schuon said that her son must have committed suicide because he didn't believe in Schuon, whereas her daughter must be a saint. The obvious inference: who flatters Schuon is good, who does not is bad, and Schuon makes such judgements even with children!

I add that S. Qassim, Sa. Suad's husband, was extremely jealous of Schuon and therefore threatened and depressed. Sa. Amīnah said he should sacrifice his wife to Schuon as Uriah sacrificed Bathsheeba.

I say all this without judgement, only recording what I've seen or heard, and not knowing exactly what Sa. Suad's relation is with Schuon.

SA. BADRIYAH: Sa. Amīnah described to me an enormous painting Sa. Badriyah did in art school which was of a nearly life size figure of a naked woman running. The entire painting was fire-red. This seemed to me to represent Sa. Badriyah herself: ambitious, frantically active, merciless like fire, and interested in power.

Schuon says she is a pneumatic, a saint, an avatic woman, an incarnation of the Pte-san-win, having something of the nature of the Blessed Virgin, and a better painter than he is, and this is not nothing, since he once agreed with me when I said he was the greatest painter in the world. Such at one time was my will to believe in him. May God show me always the difference between the true and the illusory.

From the beginning, that is, from the time of my first visit to Bloomington, I did not like Sa. Badriyah's paintings. I found them crude, too directly sexual, and above all too narcissistic, while at the same time sync' ophatic to Schuon. When one has seen the hundred, indeed thousands of nude photographs of her, one realizes that she really only paints herself; the paintings I've seen her do - and it was my task to frame them - I framed most of them - style even the Blessed Virgin in her own image. The paintings of Sa. Badriyah - and it must be remembered that they are suggested, organized and corrected by Schuon when they paint in the posture I have described - the paintings of the two of them are psycho-spiritual narcissistic fantasies of their own divinity. They have made all the world's religions and all the world's great art a kind of theater wherein they play out the drama of their egos.

In this theater of masks which Schuon has created, Sa. Badriyah is the Buffalo Cow woman bringing the sacred pipe and Schuon is the great Indian chief who receives it; or Schuon is the Christ-child and Sa. Badriyah is the Blessed Virgin; or Schuon is a cute little lion cub laying at the feet of Sa. Badriyah impersonating the female Hindu saint Lalla; or again Schuon is the sacred letter Om floating above the spread-legged Lalla-Badriyah; or again Schuon is Shiva as a swan who floats across the waters to a naked goddess-Badriyah, naked on the shore. Likewise, in the Primordial Gatherings, Sa. Badriyah is the star, the Warriress, the Bringer of the sacred pipe; and in other dances Sa. Badriyah plays the part of a Hindu goddess or a South American Princess with a headdress made up of bird feathers. Or again, a Balinese or Hindu temple prostitute. Sa. Amīnah said that in these 3rd level Primordial Gatherings that Sa. Badriyah's love of Schuon "pours from every pore of her

naked body." But one must ask, what strange perversion is this that requires Schuon to make his sexual interests public, which needs an audience? Even when Sa. Badriyah paints her pictures with Schuon lying on her naked thigh looking at her private parts, Sa. Amīnah must be a witness. Sa. Amīnah would say that she did not feel married to Schuon, she felt like a witness. But why does Schuon need a witness; as if God could not be God unless someone watched him. Sa. M. observed that Schuon needs constant adulation and must constantly don new masks because there is a crying insecurity and emptiness in the core of the man.

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I spoke with Sa. Badriyah's mother to inform her of her daughter's real activities and in hopes that her mother might be able to apply pressure that would stop the increasing decadence of Schuon's group. Her mother confirmed that Sa. Badriyah had worked as a masseuse in a place called "Shangri-la" in Florida. She could not confirm that Sharlyn (her birth name) had a message parlor in Bloomington: she didn't know. She said that Sharlyn was not naked all the time as a child which is the story Sharlyn herself has spread around. She said that she has thought for many years that Sharlyn is a lesbian, or at least bisexual. Her mother was not surprised at anything I told her, and I didn't keep very much back.

I myself thought that Sa. Badriyah's relationship with Sa. Amīnah had something lesbian about it, at least for Sa. Badriyah. Sa. Amīnah's relationship with Sa. Badriyah began when Schuon became bored with Sa. Amīnah, and, I believe, vice versa. Sa. Amīnah told me many times that she was glad that Sa. Badriyah replaced her. Sa. Amīnah deliberately and consciously trained Sa. Badriyah to be Schuon's fourth wife, ran with her naked in streams, taught her how to pacify Schuon's tantrums, fulfill his fantasies as well as how to assume the power and responsibilities that went along with being Schuon's wife. When Sa. Badriyah first came Schuon would attempt to make love to both of them at once, but Sa. Badriyah's "marriage" to Schuon was never consummated because by this time Schuon was impotent. Sa. Badriyah told me once that she was like a nun with Schuon. But I heard from both Sa. Amīnah and Sa. Badriyah's mother that Sa. Badriyah is frigid in any case. I repeat this only because it may help someone to situate Sa. Badriyah's psychology.

The reason I thought Sa. Badriyah's regard of Sa. Amīnah was lesbian was that her reaction to finding out about my "marriage" to Sa. Amīnah was violent and vindictive, as if she had been personally betrayed. Sa. Badriyah had developed a whole mythology of her and Sa. Amīnah as sister-wives. At the same time, Sa. Badriyah is a violently jealous person and she wished to eliminate her competition. She said to me one day, and I can never forget it because it is so demagogic and draconian - "Sa. Amīnah is in revolt against the Shaykh; she is guilty of pride, and she must be broken." This is the cultic mentality in a nutshell. Sa. Amīnah asked Sa. Badriyah if she said this, and she denied saying it. All this seemed to me worthy of a Caesar Borgia: a diplomatic tyrant and opportunist knows how and when to lie.

There is much that could be said about Sa. Badriyah and I think I have recorded the important facts. I notice that I can write about many aspects of Schuon and his community without bitterness, but I spent hundreds of hours trying to comfort and passify Sa. Amīnah in the process of Sharlyn's efforts to "break" her. I am bitter about this and so I will write no more about Sharlyn Romaine. I wish my account to be impartial and truthful, without any bitterness or anger. Therefore, may God help me to forgive and forget and pass on to other things.

I could continue and write more about Schuon and his tendency to use and despise people, to dissimulate, manipulate and control others, but perhaps enough has been said. I have tried my best to write in view of the truth, and not to exaggerate or falsify. I am aware that God and the Blessed Virgin are the witness of what I say and how I say it.

### THE "BELLIS" INCIDENT

I was asked to write about this subject. this occurred in December of 1990 if I remember correctly. Sa. Badriyah's new house designed by Schuon had been finished for some months and Sa. Badriyah had put up tepees in her back yard. Schuon spent 6 hours a day at this house. There are several hundred yards of woods that separate Sa. Badriyah's house from the next house which belonged to Mr. Bellis. Mr. Bellis disliked the tepees and the sound of Indian drums and put up no trespassing signs on the border of his and Sa. Badriyah's property. Schuon saw these signs first and flew into a rage, got sick, and responded in the usual manner. Sidi Kamaladin and the Arqamids were called in to save the day and they bought out Mr. Bellis, offering him a very healthy sum to move out. The war between the United States and Iraq had just broken out, and Schuon took the No Trespassing signs and the war as signs that he must drop the Islamic form. I record what Sa. Amīnah reported to me as to what he said at this time.

"He said fundamentalist Islam has forced him against it because of its exoterism. He said he would go to Indian days, but not magalis (Islamic gatherings for prayer), because the tariqa could not associate itself with exoteric Islam and therefore we turn to the primordial tradition of the American Indians because it is innocent." What is strange about this is that the magalis is not an exoteric form, but rather is Sufic.

Sidi Abdul Ali told me that Schuon was happy to forbid magalis for a year because he was bored with Islam and Primordial Gatherings corresponded to his real "nature."

I was told that one should continue saying Islamic rites (prayers), but only in private. From all I heard from Sa. Amīnah and others, Schuon had abandoned Islam and had forged rites, rites which he speaks of in a general way in his recent writings, and these rites are the Primordial Gatherings wherein Schuon is worshipped as a naked Avatara.

I was also told by Sa. Amīnah and Sidi Abdul Ali that the elimination of the magalis and the encouragement of the Indian-Hindu "dimensions" were actions taken also in hopes that discontented or "unassimilable fuqara" might be outraged by these acts and leave the tariqa. The people mentioned in this respect were the Karimids, the Marwarids, the fuqara at Lotus Arts, the Bashirids, the Jamalids and others I can't remember. This was said to me in a conversation where Sidi Abdul Ali also expressed the hope that Sidi Hossien Nasr would break away from the tariqa.

I must insist however that Schuon made all the decisions not because he was senile, but because nudism, pressing himself against nude women, syncretic rites, primordiality - all of this - is his "real nature," and has been so all along. This is why he took the no trespassing signs as a liberation; he was finally free of Islam.

I do not believe in seeing providential signs in such things; but if one must see these no trespassing signs as a divine message, then they meant exactly the opposite of how Schuon interpreted them. They meant that if Schuon continued to betray traditional spiritual forms and continued to encourage his own self-divinization, he would trespass, that is; it would be a sin against heaven for which he would be accountable.

## SCHUON AND PARANOIA

Not being a psychologist, I can make few judgements on this subject: but I will record various facts and observations.

As we noted earlier, the *Memoirs* often refer to Schuon feeling persecuted and threatened by various people or situations. There is, moreover, the fact of his reclusiveness, and his veritable obsession with secrecy combined with a tendency to lie and dissimulate. Moreover, as I hope I have sufficiently recorded, there is a tendency to blackwash anyone who he feels has betrayed him, such as Sidi Abdul Jabbar, Sidi Fath-ad-din, Sa. M. and others. Lastly, there is an enormous need to be constantly adored, praised, petted, told he is great, a prophet and so on. And in conjunction with this, falling ill, throwing up or becoming asthmatic if he hears something said against him.



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In regard to using his sickness as a form of emotional blackmail, a subject I spoke of earlier, I offer another story. Sa. Jamila-Nur was asked to gather information on Sidi Junayd who had offended so many of the second level tariqa members with his autocratic rule in the name of Schuon. She did this, but in the process developed doubts about Schuon himself. Sa. Amīnah told the Shaykh the morning of Sa. Jamila-Nur's interview would be difficult (i.e., that he wouldn't like what she had to say). He became violently ill and reproached Sa. Amīnah for ruining the entire day since he would have to worry until the afternoon when Sa. Jamila-Nur's interview was to take place. Sa. Amīnah said that Schuon looked at Sa. Amīnah at the time of the interview as if he hated her. Two months ago (before I left) I asked Sa. Badriyah about this and she said that Schuon's look of hatred had been explained by Schuon himself as being the look of a great prophet, because Schuon saw the nature of the revolt against Junayd as being also against him, and as a rejection of his prophetic nature. Sa. Jamila-Nur was severely criticized for this report and the facts she presented were rejected by Schuon. As a result of this interview Sa. Jamila-Nur left the tariqa.

When one considers this in conjunction with other facts, such as the fact that Schuon is often worrying that such and such a disciple may turn against him, then one concludes, or rather, this writer concludes, Schuon has a persecution mania or at least sees himself as a misunderstood martyr.

I would add here that in Schuon's article *To Have a Center* he speaks of Nietzsche in mixed terms, mostly negative, but what he says of him positively is of interest. He says that Nietzsche's *Zarathustra* is "the violent reaction of a profound soul against a mediocre and paralyzing cultural environment." In the *Memoirs* Schuon speaks of himself in the same terms. Like Nietzsche, Schuon is a conservative romantic, longing after a lost Aristoi, or Aristocracy, elitist, concerned with questions of race, despising others and exalting himself. Schuon is like the last expression of the German Sturm and Drang movement; he is full of a bitter wounded pride, full of "holy anger" and thunder and lightning, ready to spew the lukewarm masses out of his mouth. One sees in Schuon a Teutonic tendency to a kind of totalism, a tendency one sees in Hegel, Nietzsche, Wagner, Goethe and Kant and in degenerate form in Hitler. Schuon's total all inclusive esoterism reminds one of Wagner's effort to make opera a total art form. I offer this thesis for reflection.

But to return to Nietzsche, Schuon makes a religion of greatness; Schuon compares himself with Alexander, Ceasar, the Paraclete, the Prophet, Shankara, Plato, Niffari, and Napoleon. I should add that there are more differences than similarities between Nietzsche and Schuon, but among the similarities one must mention not only the tendency of both of them to see themselves as great Genius-martyrs (Nietzsche's *Ecce Homo*, Dionysius the crucified) but also the tendency to psycho-somatic illness.



What I wish to draw attention to here is firstly Schuon's tendency to paranoia, and second that this paranoia is extended onto the entire tariqa. All of the people who left the tariqa in 1986-87 were vilified, called paranoid, crazy, demonic, diabolic or damned, as if spirituality did not exist outside of Schuon's group, or as if it were insane or diabolic to have doubts concerning Schuon's strange behavior, his claim of infallibility, his mixing of forms, or his unorthodox marriages.

However this may be, the various books I've read on cults indicate that this tendency to vilify defectors, deny any doubts or refuse to answer legitimate questions, and reduce thinking to black/white; them/us alternatives, and to declare those who defect as damned to hell is typical of cults.

For instance, in the Rajneesh cult which was broken up in Oregon in 1985, the people in the cult who had committed many injustices and crimes against defectors as well as local "outsiders" "refused to admit their own exploitiveness" and their "own contempt for their neighbors." (Cf, Chapter 9, Caught in a Double Bind, in *The Golden Guru*, James S. Gordon, 1987). Even after murders had been committed and many people harmed, the Rajneesh members considered themselves as innocent and thought that "the Oregonians and the US Government are in a conspiracy against us." The author of the above book describes this process of denial and projection as typical of this cult in particular, and one knows it is typical of cults and oppressive governments in general. In Schuon's group there is an assumption that Schuon has free licence; that as he is enlightened he can accomplish any action unquestioned; that since he is infallible, if anyone questions him he is insane or paranoid. If Schuon's behavior seems bizarre or insane, this is because the way of prophets and Avatars is a kind of "crazy wisdom" beyond the normal ken of men and women to understand. There is no truth but the master, and he is infallible and beyond the law; only proximity to the master has any value and those who deny the master are in a conspiracy against the truth and will go to hell. In the end one must sacrifice the truth in favor of the divinity of Schuon's personality and in making this sacrifice any real spiritual life is lost; for the spiritual life can never be a cult of personality; but only a search for the truth.

Lastly I should add that this process of denial and projection is also characteristic of paranoid patients. I should further add that since I left Schuon's group, I've heard that Schuon and his associates have said I am afflicted with various psychotic illness including paranoia, a fact which I cannot affirm or deny since I am not a psychologist and my purpose is neither to psychoanalyze myself or Schuon's group, but to explain tendencies and report what I know. I should add that it is also being put out by Bloomington that I am a pariah, a chandala (Hindu outcast), a drug addict, and that I spent a year in prison. I will only respond to two of these calumnies: I do not take drugs, but I was one of the only people in Bloomington who could not stand the taste of alcohol (Schuon drinks sherry and brandy if I remember correctly) and I have never been in prison.

I should perhaps add here a few more observations on this subject, in order to add more force to the argument that Schuon's group is not a true spiritual order, but a cult led by a false master.

Thus, when perhaps 10 defections from the tariqa took place in 1986-88, the people who left were called the "Mafia," a paranoid designation if ever there was one. This group, in a series of letters by Schuon to Sidi Abu Bakr and Sidi Hossien Nasr, were accused of a "conspiracy" against Schuon. The idea of writing these letters was Sa. Amīnah's, and Schuon agreed and wrote them. It should be added that Sidi Abdul Wahid, supposed to be the group's reader leader, was called "paranoiac," a diagnosis made by Sa. Amīnah, who has no training in psychology. Moreover, Sa. Amīnah had a ten year affair with this man, but she admitted this to no one, proceeded as if she never loved him, and vilified and branded the man she had once loved.

I have been told from various sources that Sa. Amīnah and the tariqa in general are proceeding in a similar fashion in regard to me. It has been said that I am paranoid, mentally ill and sex obsessed. I do not wish, as I said earlier, to discuss my own psychological status.

The dynamic of denial-projection which is characteristic of cults, especially when they are exposed, is very much in evidence in Schuon's group since they began to be exposed. They have lied under oath and even accused the man who has been investigating them of being a "witch-hunter." When I was in Blooming to testify to the Grand Jury about tariqa activities, I was told by one of Schuon's "profane" neighbors that Michael Fitzgerald was shooting a rifle in his backyard. When asked why he was doing this, he said, according to this same neighbor, "because my life is in danger." Fitzgerald is a sort of "survivalist" who has even built a food-storage bomb shelter in his backyard against the day of Amageddon. I suppose that he believed me to be such a threat that he needed rifle practice.

I don't wish to defend my innocence against these accusations, but for the sake of truth I also record the following. Sa. Amīnah, after having "diagnosed" Sidi Abdul Wahid as paranoic, feared for many years that he would kill her. She has said similar things about me since I left. I do not blame Sa. Amīnah for such craziness; rather, it is clear to me how Schuon's corruption and paranoia spreads to those around him. May God help her.

Schuon is "infallible." Thus he rejects any reasonably well founded question about his actions, doubt or reproach - this is the denial phase of paranoia - and then, anyone who questions him is vilified, blackened and damned - this is the projection phase. Thus, since I've criticized Schuon and his visions of the Virgin and questioned his spiritual validity, I am paranoid and sex obsessed - despite the fact that it not me who practices rifle shooting, nor I who

claim to have had sexual contact with the Virgin as well as with some 40 to 50 other women.

I should add, on the subject of Schuon's paranoia, that he has built a very bizarre series of fences - one of them 15 to 20 feet high - around Sa. Badriyah's house, to prevent anyone seeing into her property. Even the "profane" neighbor mentioned earlier said these structures were paranoid.

What is characteristic in all of this is a them verses us attitude which is the exact opposite of charity and the love of neighbor. Sa. Amīnah was condemned for her need of love and affection on the grounds that the "mafia" also wanted love, humanity and kindness from Schuon. Here again one sees Schuon's pathology; only the cult of Schuon's personality matters - everything else is "sentimental," "profane," or "diabolic." On a vastly smaller scale, one sees analogies with Russia under the government of Joseph Stalin.

## AN AFTERWORD

In what I write here the exactness of my quotes can be questioned. I have a hundred pages or more of notes taken down primarily from Sa. Amīnah, but also from comments of Sa. Badriyah and Sa. Hamida, three of Schuon's "wives." I wrote these notes mostly during phone conversations, and as I don't know shorthand my notes are fragmented or in some cases paraphrases of what was said. They are however as accurate as I could make them. Sa. Amīnah saw some of these notes and said that they were very "dangerous and should be burnt." She also said that she thought they were inaccurate in some cases. But the reason she thought this ~~and~~ is something hard to explain to those "outside" the inner circle, is that those immediately around Schuon are trained by him to protect his reputation at all costs. Mistakes Schuon makes are always blamed on someone else. Anyone who questions Schuon, even obliquely, is immediately suspected of "trying to destroy the hierarchy." This is why Sa. Amīnah questioned my notes. Strictly speaking, only that which is positive that is said about Schuon is true; whatever is questionable about him is by definition false. She once told me, for instance, that "even when he lies, he tells the truth." And to support this claim she told me a story about when she first became sexually involved with Schuon. After a time Schuon's second wife began to suspect him of being involved with another woman. She asked Schuon if he was sleeping with Sa. Amīnah and Schuon said no. Sa. Hamidah then stormed downstairs and announced to Sa. Latifa (wife No. 1) that the Shaykh had lied. She went home and opened the Koran, a practice all the people in Bloomington indulge in (this is a kind of superstitious practice by means of which the Koran is used as an "oracle") and she read "that is Jesus, Son of Mary, the Word of Truth, him in whom they doubt." From this Sa. Hamidah deduced that Schuon is like Christ, son of Mary, and that if he lies he tells the truth. Some time later, Sa. Amīnah was told by Schuon to tell Sa. Hamidah she had become the third wife. Schuon himself never does anything that would put him in the slightest conflict, since this

would make him sick. The people around him all lie, deceive, dissimulate and manipulate in order to protect Schuon. It should ~~not~~ be thought that Schuon is himself unaware of this, the contrary is true, he is a master at lying "diplomacy." I would say, if asked, and merely as a matter of fact, without bitterness, that Schuon is a whited . . . *sepulchre* .

There are many examples of this sort of lying diplomacy. For instance, many authors in the tariqa write books and it often happens that Schuon tells these men, such as Sidi Abu Bakr that the books are wonderful, only then to turn around and tell his wives that the books are worthless. This is sometimes called "corrective diplomacy." Another example is when a woman in the community lost respect for Sa. Amīnah, she was told that Sa. Amīnah was a saint, despite the fact that Sa. Amīnah was considered to have committed adultery. This lie was called "corrective."

The reason I bring up this subject of lying diplomacy, perhaps more accurately called disinformation campaigns, is the following: I learned from someone who is still connected with the tariqa, and whose defection is not open, that the tariqa dignitaries have put out the following disinformation: They have said that I fell in love with Sa. Amīnah after kindness showed to me by her and that I gave her flowers and wrote her love poems, and that my love became so excessive that Schuon was obliged to put an end to it. This whole story is false. The reason it has been fabricated is twofold: one, to make Sa. Amīnah appear as a loyal wife of Schuon, and two, to make Schuon look powerful and decisive. At the same time it places the blame for my defection on me.

I had not planned to write a great deal about my relationship with Sa. Amīnah, but I see that I am obliged to do so for sake of truth. I will try to be brief.

Having read Schuon's books, and believing him to be a true spiritual master, I moved to Bloomington and entered Islam. I had been living in Bloomington for some nine months, painting houses, performing odd jobs, when the subject of my initiation into the tariqa came up. The Alids - Sa. Amīnah was married to Sidi Abdul Ali (who are "divorced" by Schuon but legally married) asked me to paint their house in view of knowing me better. This house painting, as I only worked 2 days a week there, went on for a few months. I often had lunch or dinner with them and they were long meals with much talk. Sa. Amīnah already began showing me favor, giving me things, and teaching me about Schuon. I saw she was very lonely. Finally I was initiated and the painting of the house was finished. A few months passed and then both Sa. Amīnah and Sidi Qaddur asked me to help Sidi Siraj, a faqir who I was friendly with and who was suffering from various psychological problems. It was beyond my capacity to help him and one night he was violent with me. Wanting nothing to do with violence I ended my friendship with him. Sa. Amīnah felt responsible for this debacle since she had asked me to help him, and she began to call me often, and then more often. Before long we were talking almost on a daily basis.



Finally, as I had once had the abbess of a Russian Orthodox convent as a spiritual Mother in California, I asked her if she would be my spiritual Mother. She said no, she didn't wish to be anyone's spiritual Mother, but that she would be my friend. I asked her if this was proper, (I knew she was one of Schuon's wives) as Schuon had said in a text men and women under such circumstances could not be friends. She said my problem is that I've spent too much of my life alone, like a hermit, and I needed to be more personal with others, beginning with her. *She told me a story when I questioned her, in which a parrot presumes to be equal to a sufi; the moral was do not presume to question spiritual superiors.*

Finally I sensed she had fallen in love with me and over the next 3-4 weeks I wrote 30 pages about all my doubts concerning what she was doing. She later burned all these notes because she thought them dangerous. I asked her, if we had this friendship, then could she ask Schuon's permission for it. She said no, because he was too old to be able to explain it to him, and that she is no longer married to Schuon. She explained that only Sa. Badriyah was the "real wife and shakti" of Schuon. She explained to me the nature of intrinsic morality as it is defined in Schuon's article *The Problem of Qualifications*, that if something leads towards God and harms no one, and our friendship could harm no one, then it was good. (All this, providing no one knew about it.) I was frightened, but at that time I thought her my spiritual superior, so I agreed to the friendship. After some days she called and said that she needed comforting and could she visit my apartment. She said "you don't have to make love to me but could we just lie together for a while." I first said no, but the next day said yes, and I was now falling in love with her, but afraid to admit it because I wasn't sure at this point if she was married or not to Schuon. She came over with the expected result and within the first two days was teaching me the "tantric" techniques of spiritual sexual union developed by Schuon as well as telling me about his visions, Primordial Gatherings and so on. Except for perhaps 6-7 days, I have seen her from 3 to 10 hours a day for the last year.

After a week or two she told me that we must be married. She defined this as "intrinsic marriage" which she explained as follows: "An intrinsic marriage is a marriage that is not necessarily civil, but which is made by two people freely in view of God and the spiritual life. The condition is that there be a love between the two partners that leads them towards God."

Thus we made permanent vows to each other, recited the Surat ul-Asr as a marriage vow daily. Every day we prayed to the Virgin, invoked together, and loved one another in secret. Her health improved and we were very happy and suited each other well.

I had regular doubts about this from the beginning. During one of the first few days she told me her body was full of the "substance of the Shaykh" (meaning Schuon's semen) and that she had come to give me her body and this

substance; that it was a gift and a blessing for me from Schuon himself - who was too old to see me himself. But that our union would be blessed by him from heaven.

Some time later, when I again raised objections or doubts - that if she weren't married to Schuon then why must the relationship be secret - she said that I was extremely ungrateful to doubt her, since she offers me a knowledge of Schuon that no man can possess except me. She said this to me many times over the ensuing months. She said many times, "you know more about the Shaykh than any man in the world." She would reproach me for not trusting her and for having doubts, claiming I had a personality disorder not to trust her. *I once argued that she was married to three men she replied she wasn't and that I had a "dependent personality disorder" because I doubt her fidelity.* As I am accused of having initiated this entire affair, I offer in the appendix a letter from her in which she confirms the facts that I am presenting about our relationship. To go on,

Then in August, I had to find a new place to live and was looking for a house to rent, but she insisted on buying one. I objected to this, but at last gave in. I found a house and, S. Amīnah bought the house for me (in my name), depositing a bag of \$70,000.00 in gold which she laid on the table of the Realtors. She really bought this house for me so we could have a place to meet in secret, and so I wouldn't have to work so hard and we could devote ourselves to the spiritual life together.

I again raised doubts periodically. One day she took off Schuon's ring and performed a ceremony wherein she looked up to heaven and said that the Blessed Virgin Herself knows she is not married to Schuon, and she put the ring back on her finger and said the ring was mine.

Finally, my doubts became more persistent and regular, and by December she finally consented to write Schuon letters asking to be married to me. I found this odd that we should have to ask for something that I thought already accomplished. I include at the end of this book in an appendix a copy of her letter, as well as my first letter which says we are already married, and my second draft that shows how she made me change the letter into asking permission for what I already thought I had.

I do not wish to seem to be blaming SA. AMĪNAH. for any of this. If there is blame, it belongs to Schuon because this notion "intrinsic marriage" in fact is the idea that justified his marrying the last three wives. Therefore, before I go on with Schuon's and Sa. Badriyah's reaction to the letters I have mentioned, I must first describe Schuon's marriages.



After Schuon "took" Sa. Amīnah, which was always her way of putting it, and had had sexual relations with her for some time, she told him she did not wish to be a concubine. He said that if she did not wish this then they could be married. She said she would like a ring. He said she could have one which meant she had to go and buy it herself. She did so and this was all there was to it. There was no ceremony and no witnesses. Substantially the same thing happened with Sa. Hamidah and Sa. Badriyah. Such marriages, I know, have no validity from the traditional point of view. Schuon gave out that these were Islamic marriages, but this was another lie since Islamic marriages require witnesses, an Imam, a guardian to give the woman to the groom, and various other conditions which were unfulfilled. As always, Schuon adapts traditions to his own purposes and convenience.

Schuon then told Sa. Amīnah that she was intrinsically divorced from Sidi Abdul Ali. At another point she told me she was Islamically divorced from Sidi Abdul Ali. In either case there was no proceeding undergone - only the word of Schuon. Here again, the divorce was meaningless. Then Schuon told SA. AMĪNAH. that she should continue having sexual relations with Sidi Abdul Ali at the same time as she was sleeping with Schuon. Schuon claimed to do this as a "mercy," but the real reason was that Schuon could then seem magnanimous to Sidi Abdul Ali at the same time as he forced S. A. to sleep with two men at the same time, thereby dominating her sexual life, a domination which gave him control over her psyche. Moreover, by having SA. AMĪNAH. live with Sidi Abdul Ali, he absolved himself of responsibility over her, at the same time as he covered himself lest someone accuse him of polygamy which is a legal crime in Europe and America. Sa. Hamidah was also made to continue to have sexual relations with Sidi Abdul Qayyum after Schuon took her as his "wife."

To continue with our story: Schuon's reaction to the letters we gave him was extremely violent. I heard that he screamed and pounded his fists. SA. AMĪNAH. was told at first she was married to Schuon; she had no right not to be married to Schuon, that "the family of the Bodhisattva is inviolate" and that she is "the first woman in all of human history to betray a prophet."

It is of interest that Schuon has said that he thought the ideal marital relationship was that of the American Indians who joined and parted from their wives based entirely on their feelings. This was, he says, the primordial manner of marriage. I do not know if this is in fact the case, but clearly he doesn't apply this principle to his own situation or my supposed marriage.

I was told that I had been betrayed and misled by SA. AMĪNAH.; that her sin was very grave. I was told that the relationship should be ended immediately, and that Schuon said that if he were me he would cut the relationship off as if with a sword.

I spent day or two crying and stricken in a manner I have only experienced in grief for the death of a loved one. I loved SA. AMĪNAH., thought myself married to her, and planned to spend the rest of my life with her. SA. AMĪNAH. pled for mercy and was told that there was no mercy without truth, and the truth is that she was married to Schuon whether she liked it or not, and not to be married to him would mean damnation for her. I was worried because I had done something against the Shaykh without knowing it, and this made me so unhappy I wished to die, and I was told that Schuon said, that it would "be good if I died, if I knew I had done something against him." (These are Schuon's words.)

For one day I actually tried to do what Schuon had asked me to do and separate from SA. AMĪNAH., but it was impossible for both of us. The love between us was good and led towards God and Schuon had not treated SA. AMĪNAH. as a wife for the last 3-4 years, since Sa. Badriyah's coming. We let Schuon know that such a separation would kill us, and he then said that we would be permitted to continue together in what he called a "mystical friendship" which was on the line between the "absolute law and the relative law" - the absolute law forbids adultery and adultery consists of sexual penetration and the mixing of sexual fluids, and therefore we could do everything but these two things. I was then told that this decision was binding on us for the rest of our lives. I asked 4 or 5 times over the next month if it was certain that this permission was permanent, and each time Schuon said yes. I was finally told that if I asked again he would be angry at me for doubting him.

Before I was told this I asked on various occasions if he was sure that I shouldn't sacrifice my love for him, since he was my spiritual master. I was told that such a sacrifice was "sentimental voluntarism" and this is "not part of the Shaykh's perspective." Sa. Badriyah wrote me a letter which I still have in which she said that the ruling that this permission is permanent had been accurately represented to me, and that "the constellation of things that are has been exceptionally permitted" to me.

As the months passed I tried to grasp how I could have a "mystical friendship" that was virtually a marriage. I began to long for a sacramental basis to the relationship. I brought this up many times and finally was reproached for being ungrateful for the exceptional permission I had been given, with the result, as I explained before, that Schuon became violently ill and vomited because of my ungratefulness. I was then made to write a letter of apology renouncing my desire for sacramentalization as a "false mystical idealism" concerning all forms of spiritual union. I was forced to write this letter and do not see a single thing wrong with a longing for a sacramental foundation with the woman that one loves, especially since SA. AMĪNAH. had pursued and married me, and not the reverse, and had done so because Schuon himself had neglected her to such an extent that her marriage consisted of nothing more than watching Schuon look at the vagina of Sa. Badriyah 3 hours a week while Sa. Badriyah was painting.

At this point it may be appropriate to mention that in October or November, before all these events occurred, Schuon had received a letter from a French Catholic nun who was or wished to be a disciple, asking him to explain why he had four wives. He wrote to her that he only had one wife, Sa. Latifa, and that S. A. and Sa. Hamidah were not wives, but "spiritual unions" and that Sa. Badriyah was an "adoption." This was another factor that made S. A. convinced she was not married to Schuon. When months later I mentioned this letter to Sa. Badriyah, I was told the letter was a diplomatic lie meant to passify and comfort the poor outraged French nun. I mention this because it typifies once again Schuon's expedient and deceitful methods.

To return to my story; having been reproached for ungratefulness and having apologized, I was told to be "simple as a chipmunk," that the permission I had been given was permanent, to last my whole life, and that I "should not be mentalistic" nor "try to define things" - that if I were grateful and simple as a chipmunk, I would not need a sacramental foundation, but should live happily and simply, living on that fine line between adultery and marriage. I accepted this, was grateful, and though it was difficult to live in this ambiguous manner, I was happy to be with the woman I loved. I was told finally that this ambiguous relationship was a "Zen Koan" that I should not try to figure it out, but simply accept it.

The tension between SA. AMÎNAH. and Sa. Badriyah was considerable. Sa. Badriyah had opened the Koran and had received the words "punish punish,... punish punish - and so she proceeded to launch regular attacks upon the person and character of SA. AMÎNAH.. S. A. would often come to my house weeping and needing comfort.

Sa. Amînah had told me many times that her "marriage" with Schuon was "all obligations and no rights," that it was a life of sacrifice, that "if people knew what he was really like they would not wish to be close to him" - that he was hard and judgmental - and that she had never loved him, but rather pretended to be in love with him.

She often said that during her years with Schuon she often wished for a normal life, and a husband she could talk to, and tell her problems to. At the mere hint of a problem or fault Schuon would get sick or asthmatic. Therefore she longed for a real relationship. After 10 years of self-sacrificing with Schuon she was completely right, in my opinion, to resent the fact that Schuon had abandoned her for a younger woman. At 49 years of age Schuon found it unpleasant to look at her body because "the prophet needs a young Shakti."

These legitimate concerns of Sa. Amînah were by no means new with me. They explain why SA. AMÎNAH. had an affair with Cyril Glasse (Sidi Abdul Wahid) from 1972 to 1982, apparently only two years of which - 1977-79 were actively sexual. During this time she was actively sexual with Schuon as

well, often with both of them on the same day. However this may be, I record this not to condemn Sa. Amīnah ("let he who is without sin cast the first stone")\_ but to point to the conflict in her soul, wherein on the one hand she wishes to have the legitimate life of a normal woman, and on the other, she felt obliged to serve Schuon who insisted on the absolute possession of her for himself, a possession that was to continue even after his death, yet who made little or no effort to treat her as a husband normally treats his wife.

I asked Sa. Amīnah many times how she could have betrayed Schuon with Sidi Abdul Wahid, or, for that matter with me, and she would say that she wished to save Sidi Abdul Wahid's soul; with me, she said she didn't believe she was married to Schuon any longer. She would often repeat to me sentences like "he (Schuon) is the most wonderful man in the world" or "I am completely devoted to him" and when I would point out that if she were so devoted and he was so wonderful, then why did she betray him, she would some times reply that I didn't understand "esoterism." TO me these sentences seemed the result of 15 years of mechanically praising Schuon.

I often asked her in the beginning how she could have three husbands, or two anyway, since at this point she said she was not married to Schuon, and not feel, as it were, that she was robbing from Peter to pay Paul and vice versa. She would always say that she was not married to Sidi Abdul Ali either, that he was a selfish, helpless man who she was tired of servicing, and she did so because Schuon ordered her to do so.

One day she came to me with a different answer to this question that she gathered from conversation with Schuon and Sa. Badriyah: she said that the ability to change from husband to husband or wife to wife, is characteristic of pneumatics, those who are utterly and intrinsically spiritual, since such people - especially Schuon himself - can resolve such contradictions without the slightest effort. this seemed to me about the most cunning excuse for conscienceless behavior that I have ever heard. (cf. Schuon's early article "Conceptual Dimensions in his *Transcendent Unity* for this idea of perspective shifts, the operative idea here is that ~~of~~ conflicting wives, like conflicting concepts, are resolvable from above, and the Above and Schuon are one and the same. See also Dialectical antinominalism in *In the Face of the Absolute*.)

I do not wish to be seeming to blame Sa. Amīnah in any of this. She is trapped in Schuon's world by threats of damnation, guilt and terror. Schuon imposes on her the fantasy that he is a prophet-king and Avatara to whom one owes complete self-sacrifice. One should be passive towards Schuon like "a corpse in the hands of a washer of the dead." Sa. Amīnah's desire for a husband and a normal life was stigmatized by Schuon as "diabolic" and "horizontal." She was told she was the only woman in all human history to betray a prophet which makes her sin more grave than any woman's in history. She was told that she must be married to Schuon whether she liked it or not and that if she desired human warmth and affection, these desires were from the devil.



It's true that Sa. Amīnah is responsible in that she should have been able to see through this kind of cultic blackmail, but having witnessed Schuon's extremely cunning and manipulative psychic control of others, often verging on the monstrous, I cannot really blame Sa. Amīnah, but rather, I pity her weakness and pray for her release. She is a kind of psychic captive to a genius of such a high order that he not only manipulates the psychology of his wives, but he manipulates for his own ends, religious doctrines and traditions as well. I grant that she receives wealth, position, honor and an identity as the wife of a "great man" and a member of an elite community, but these things are nothing in the spiritual life, for as St. Paul has said "without love... or charity... they are as "sounding brass." <sup>1</sup> (see note below)

To continue with the story: the last six months of my stay in Schuon's group, from December to July, was a downhill slide wherein I saw increasingly what kind of man Schuon really is and the manner of his operation. I witnessed the kind of thrall that he can hold people in, and how tyrannical he is, and how he delegates this tyranny - at this time to Sa. Badriyah, just as in the past he used Sidi Junayd for this. Schuon's dark genius on a social level manifests as an amazing charismatic ability to terrorize those close to him into a psychic submission which is truly frightening. Sa. Badriyah would criticize Sa. Amīnah, using arguments from Schuon day after day for months. Every time Sa. Amīnah tried to defend herself she was accused of pride, told that she had the devil in her, or was "individualistic." Schuon would tell Sa. Badriyah what to say. For instance, Sa. Amīnah was told at one point, when she asked Schuon to pray for mercy for her, since she couldn't leave me, that he could not pray for someone in a state of sin, and that there could be no mercy for her unless she admitted that "truth", namely that she was married to Schuon. Then, when Schuon saw that Sa. Amīnah was completely devastated as a result of Sa. Badriyah's badgering, he would play the part of the generous saint, benignly allowing her to continue to visit him and Sa. Badriyah for her three hours a week of watching them paint. Sa. Amīnah was supposed to be grateful for this extraordinary grace.

Sa. Amīnah, during this period, became physically more and more delicate, needing often to sleep, spending a great deal of time in tears. I began to see Sa. Badriyah and indeed, Schuon himself, increasingly as wolves in sheep's clothing, alternately being cruel and then kind to Sa. Amīnah, slowly breaking down her resistance. During this time I tried to learn to develop a sense of humor (something I've never had much of) to keep Sa. Amīnah happy. I wrote her many love poems to cheer and comfort her (she later burned most of these poems because she decided they were disobliging to Schuon.) Some days she would be too upset or tired to perform the prayers, so I would sit beside her as she was resting and pray out loud so she could follow me mentally. Other days I would sing her songs, especially songs to the Blessed Virgin, in order to comfort her.

note: one thinks of literary examples of females held in this kind of psychic thralldom: for instance, the medieval virgin held captive by the dragon, or the heroine (Adriadne?) held captive by the Minotaur in the ~~labyrinth~~ Labyrinth, the <sup>65</sup>19<sup>th</sup> century novel Servant and other such stories.



Sa. Badriyah's effort to control Sa. Amīnah became more and more demagogic and she began dictating what pictures she could and could not have on the walls of her bedroom, what clothes she should or shouldn't wear, how she should think, and what she should do. Sa. Amīnah became simultaneously more and more divided in her mind, and when I would point out that Sa. Badriyah was acting like a tyrant, she would defend her and say my attitude towards Sa. Badriyah was too low, that she is a Mahashakti and an avataric woman. This conflict in Sa. Amīnah between seeing the truth about Schuon and Sa. Badriyah, but then denying this truth when it finally came to the point of having to admit their behavior was tyrannical and hypocritical - this split in Sa. Amīnah became more and more pronounced as time went on.

This split was already present before I came along, as Sa. Amīnah was glad Sa. Badriyah took over her responsibilities as the "Shakti" of Schuon, for Sa. Amīnah had always felt she was not a "shakti," and had only pretended to be one. She always said that I could not imagine how difficult it is to be with him. Part of Sa. Amīnah had long ago rejected Schuon and desired to get away from him, but since "it is a grave sin to betray Schuon" she had to repeat to herself over and over "he is the most wonderful man in the whole world." Half believing this, she therefore had also to half believe that she was cut off from the divine Mercy and that her sin was the worst sin of any woman in all of human history. thus, on the one hand she would tell me she wished only to die, then on the other, she would come to see me every day to get away from Schuon's terrorizing methods.

I could tell other stories on this subject, but perhaps I have said enough. I have wished to show how Schuon's enormously sophisticated psychological methods are used to tyrannize over people, and Sa. Amīnah is scarcely the only person he has done this to - and moreover, one must also realize that the purpose of Schuon's analysis of the soul of Sa. Amīnah has little or nothing to do with the good of Sa. Amīnah's soul. Rather, he reduces her soul to a ruin in order to break her and use her to his own purpose, it being of paramount importance that nothing and no one be "disobliging to the Shaykh" because he has no faults and is incapable of doing anything wrong. Such however is not the behavior of a true Shaykh, much less of a prophet, but rather it is the cunning psychological indirections of a man with totalitarian ambitions. It was the gradual realization of this that led me to renounce Schuon as anything resembling a spiritual master.

To bring this story to an end, the reader will recall that during the winter I had been told by Schuon and Sa. Badriyah that I need never sacrifice myself for Schuon, that this was a "sentimental voluntarism," not part of Schuon's perspective; that I had been given an exceptional "permission" to be intimate - "mystical friends" with Sa. Amīnah for the rest of my life. Moreover, I was told to be simple like a chipmunk, grateful and happy to be given the Shaykh's wife and an intimate friend, and that I should not define this relationship, since it had been defined by Schuon himself.

Suddenly everything was reversed for no reason that I could perceive. I was suddenly told that the relationship was not a Zen Koan which I shouldn't try to define because Schuon was "not an ambiguous communicator." And then I was told I had to totally end my relationship with Sa. Amīnah, that Sa. Amīnah was too weak to end it and that Schuon not only asks, but demands as my spiritual master that I sacrifice myself for him. Both Sa. Badriyah and Sa. Hamidah told me Schuon had demanded this sacrifice. I was told I had a "grace period" of one or two months in which to accomplish this.

If Schuon was not an "ambiguous communicator" then why, when I had been chided for being a "sentimental voluntarist" in offering to sacrifice myself, was I now suddenly asked to force myself by strength of will to sacrifice my love and relationship with Sa. Amīnah? Why, if the "permission was permanent" was I asked to end it after a period of 5 months? Why, when I had been told to love on a fine line between adultery and friendship, was I told by Schuon "there is nothing between marriage and friendship"? And why, when I had been told to be simple and grateful and had tried to demonstrate I was grateful, was Schuon himself now contradictory and complex. Many times I had asked if the permission was permanent, even to the point of irritating Schuon, and many times I was told yes, it was. But now I was told, when I complained of these contradictions, that I misunderstood and he had not said such things when I knew very well he had. Why was he now lying? What became more and more apparent to me with time was that Schuon and Sa. Badriyah feared that Schuon's reputation would be hurt if others knew that Sa. Amīnah wanted another man than him, and that he had been obliged to grant her a permission to stay with me because she didn't love him, and told him she didn't love him and never had. I am now convinced that the reversal came about because of their fear that my relationship with Sa. Amīnah would become known and that it would prove that "something was rotten in Denmark" and that the great prophet who believes he is Krishna is not so great after all.

The terms of his demand that I sacrifice myself were that he didn't wish me to die, but he had said on another occasion that if I did anything contrary to him, "it would be good if you wished to die."

A month went by since I had been asked to sacrifice myself. I still was trying to hold on to my belief in Schuon and felt I should fulfill his demand. Sa. Amīnah did not agree with me about this. She said she would "rather be utterly destroyed" than give me up. She was referring to a phrase in the Koran that came up through the practice called "opening the Koran." (Seeking an answer to a situation or problem based on the verse of the Koran that one opened to.) I do not believe in the legitimacy of this practice as I saw it much abused, and therefore I will not cite the passage in question. In any case, I decided finally to try to accomplish Schuon's plan and left on a plane for New York City to stay with a friend and mourn Sa. Amīnah's loss. I returned 3 or 4 days later, the trip having been a disaster.

Upon my return SA. AMĪNAH. began speaking of divorcing Schuon. But it was clear to me that she couldn't do it, as they were putting enormous pressure on her, telling her the devil was in her, that she would be damned, and the usual cultic techniques. So I again left, this time suicidal, still believing I must sacrifice myself for this man and unable yet to entirely admit how monstrous he really is. Many times I almost drove myself into bridges at 90 miles an hour. Finally, I reached the house of my mother, told her the entire story, start to finish. I broke the promise that Schuon had coerced me to make. He had demanded of me in January that I swear on the Koran never to speak of my marriage to SA. AMĪNAH. or of the subsequent permission I had been given. I had not wanted to swear this, and procrastinated about it for a week, but had finally done so under Sa. Amīnah watchful eye. I decided finally that Schuon did not have the right to tyrannize a woman who did not love him, nor did he have the right to demand of me a sacrifice that would push me to the point of suicide, and that his asking me to make this sacrifice was for selfish reasons and had nothing to do with teaching me something in the capacity of spiritual master. Schuon, I decided, was not Marpa, the Tibetan spiritual master who asked Milarepa to do impossible things to sacrifice his ego, rather Schuon was a selfish old man who wanted his wives to be like jewels, mere decorations for his vainglorious crown. I decided I could not make myself a sacrifice for his vanity: moreover I decided such a man could not be a spiritual master, or if this was how spiritual masters proceeded, I wanted nothing to do with them. I thought all this out with my mother's help and that of a friend of mine in Cleveland and decided to return to Bloomington for the sake of SA. AMĪNAH. and the spiritual life we had formed together. Inwardly I had renounced Schuon himself. After a few days I saw I could not maintain such a position because S. Amīnah self-deception and duplicity of soul was too imbedded. Sa. Amīnah wanted to live in "sin" with me rather than divorce Schuon, and I could no longer concede that Schuon was a legitimate master whom I had to obey whereas Sa. Amīnah wished to disobey him only if she did it secretly. I no longer wished to play this game of deceit, and therefor announced to Sa. Suad that I had been married to Sa. Amīnah, thus breaking the rule of secrecy that had been imposed on me once again. The next day Mr. Fitzgerald (Sidi Kalamadin) and Mr Jones (Sidi Qaddur) came to my house to announce my relationship with SA. AMĪNAH. was finished. They virtually locked Sa. Amīnah in her room, changed her phone number and forbade her to see me. I found all this awful and terroristic and in despair called Rama Coomaraswamy and Dr. Wolfgang Smith who together with another individual in Bloomington. The three of them talked over my story, helped me see that my conviction that Schuon was a false prophet was true, helped me to organize myself and flee from Bloomington. They all felt that it was dangerous for me to stay in Bloomington. To these men I am deeply indebted and grateful.

I should add that my doubts about Schuon did not begin during this period but rather from the beginning of my relationship with SA. AMĪNAH. I was surprised by Schuon's meanness and tendency to tantrums, to despise others, and his selfishness and wish to be divinized. I was shocked that he had no conscience at these Primordial Gatherings about sexual contact with young girls. I was shocked by his treatment of Sa. Amīnah. I could never believe his opinion that SA. AMĪNAH. and Sa. Badriyah were saints and as early as January I began

to doubt the legitimacy of the Visions of the Virgin. This last doubt is the central and decisive concern for me. I remember clearly one day being overcome with a feeling of disgust and indignation on behalf of the Blessed Virgin, but I suppressed this because I had been brain washed to think such thoughts on my part were diabolic. But I was right to be disgusted.

When one understands that "the devil tells 9 truths in order to tell one lie" one sees that in Schuon this one lie is a lie against the Virgin Mary, and part of this lie is that because Schuon had sexual contact with the Virgin Mary, that he is therefore an Avatara - is so monstrous and awful that the 9 truths Schuon may have told in his books are overshadowed. The entire development of his writing, painting and his life becomes of doubtful validity. He dreamed a dream which became a nightmare. If one loved Schuon it is because every man who ardently desires God, desires a Master to lead him to God and this desire for a Master is a legitimate desire. But one is forced to admit that Schuon is not this Master. But as Meister Eckhart said, "God is not mocked," and the truth remains the truth and as the Prophet Mohammed said, "seek ye the truth," even unto China." Schuon tried to create a civilization and failed through his own pride, and this is an old story, and one must rise up on one's feet and begin anew, free to learn that God has to teach us, in a world where there are many illusions and trials. As Guenon once said, "the end of a world is the end of an illusion." To face the fact that Schuon was a master only of illusions may be a hard truth, but is not a hard truth for all that, still a truth and infinitely preferable to a beautiful lie?

This does not mean that when Schuon enunciates basic Vedantic doctrine, that is, to discriminate between the Real and the unreal, and concentrate on the Real - that this doctrine is false. It means that Schuon's use of this doctrine is suspect because he has used it to glorify himself. Likewise, Schuon's adaptation of the Buddhist doctrine of the 6 Paramitas into the 6 themes of Stations of Wisdom is not a falsification of this Buddhist doctrine, but rather that Schuon has taken the 6th theme, that of Immanence, and identified himself and his body (through the Alchemy) with the highest metaphysical truths. This is to make a religion of himself. Frithjof Schuon IS the Transcendent Unity of the religions, and this is a heresy not simply against one traditional form, but against all of them. This constitutes a crime against the Spirit of an order that does not admit of easy comparisons. Therefore, if one is to read Schuon's books, one can only rightly do so with an awareness of Schuon's global error, and thus, while recognizing that the traditional doctrines are reflected in Schuon's writings, they are so in the midst of a universalist ambition, the like of which has never been heretofore seen. Therefore, if one once read Schuon with awe and reverence, and blind faith in his seemingly infallible scope, one must now read him with an absent heart, a critical mind and a skeptical eye. Obviously the Moslem way, as the Invocation of the Name, but for myself, I can no longer follow Schuon's method since I see where it has led him, and I do not wish to go where Schuon has himself ended up. As to the paintings; they do not picture the Blessed Virgin and to pray to them therefore constitutes a form of idolatry. He has falsified the Vedanta and in the Primordial Gatherings he abuses the doctrine of Atma-Maya. And even Schuon's use of the

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American Indian religion is questionable and one can see that someone one day will have to apologize for his illegitimate use of their sacred way. May Waken Tanka have mercy on his soul.

## THE FALSE VIRGIN

There is one last story to tell. After I left Bloomington over 3 weeks ago, SA. AMÎNAH., missing me for 3-4 days, decided to leave Bloomington and come to see me in Cleveland. I accepted her at her word that she did not do this under prompting by the hierarchy. She has told me countless times that I know more about Frithjof Schuon than any other man in the world. This may or may not be so. But I do know that Sa. Badriyah had said to me that she thought this story between SA. AMÎNAH. and I could destroy the Tariqa. Whether or not SA. AMÎNAH. came to see me under prompting by the hierarchy and whether or not this story between her and I will destroy the tariqa, I do not know: God knows best.

SA. AMÎNAH came to Cleveland to tell me she wished to divorce both Mr. Murray (Sidi Abdul Ali) and Schuon, if I would come back to Bloomington and continue in Schuon's tariqa and spend the rest of my life with her in the house where we had spent the last year together. I told her I could never return to Bloomington, that she would have to come to me. She has not and indeed cannot do so. She hasn't the strength to resist the tyranny of their mind control methods.

When she was in Cleveland with me she told me a new detail of the vision Schuon had had of the Blessed Virgin a few months previously. He had this visionary dream when he was sick as usual, and when she was bare-breasted also as usual. He talked to her for a few hours of his miserable youth and other matters. At one point he asked the Virgin why Saydah Amînah had betrayed him. She is supposed to have said "because the devil got into her."

Here then is the spiritual pathology of Schuon. Even the Virgin serves his convenience. Imagine what it must be like to be condemned by the Blessed Virgin herself, she whose purpose is not condemnation but Mercy. How convenient is this vision! Schuon has used the Blessed Virgin herself to blackmail Sa. Amînah. into submission to him. A more coercive, destructive and demeaning strategy of blackmail I have never heard of.

The next morning, after her first night with me, the subject of this vision came up a second time. Unlike the night before when I had been silent as she told me this vision, I spoke up and said the vision was a ploy and a lie, and that she should deny it, and that all of Schuon's visions were lies. I said I knew that she could not abide my questioning Schuon in this way, and that I was going



out for a half hour and if she wished, the airport was 5 minutes walk from our hotel and she could easily go back to Bloomington. She did. She could not deny Schuon and his false virgin.

Sa. Badriyah said she would break SA. AMĪNAH. and it is done, and one prays for her soul, that it might grow strong again.

Those who would blame SA. AMĪNAH. for her weakness and lack of courage should consider the terrible nature of this kind of mind control and demagogic intimidation. Moreover, let those who would blame SA. AMĪNAH., if there are any who do, consider that it is primarily because of her that the truth about Schuon is known, that it was her desire for love and a normal life that led her to reveal things about Schuon that have been secret for many years. She is not to be faulted for this, but praised, for she served the truth despite herself.

I should like to say a few more words concerning Sa. Amīnah. I have heard that she has "lost her mind" (Sa. Latifah said this), and is taking drugs to stabilize herself. She still defends Schuon, even though he has ruined her life and she has been sacrificed, like so many others, to preserve Schuon's myth and reputation. This is how powerful the brainwashing techniques of Schuon's group are.

Sa. Amīnah is one of the principle victims in this situation. I do not blame her for her efforts to justify Schuon's righteousness, nor her enlistment in the effort to vilify me. I know that she suffers from all sides in this situation. I know that her effort to avoid the suffering of admitting the hypocrisy of Schuon and the fact that he has used her for his own convenience and self glorification, can only lead to her suffering even more profoundly. I do not blame her therefore, but feel compassion for her and pray for her. I hope moreover that others might do so also. I cannot but believe that God Himself looks on her with a merciful eye. Her circumstances are genuinely tragic and God willing, will eventually lead, as all tragedies do, to a catharsis, a turning over of the soil, and a clearing of the air, such that new life may grow and God's good sun could then shine down and penetrate the dark places and expose the frightful things. God is the truth, and may He help Sa. Amīnah and all of us to see the truth and be set free.

To those who would think that I have sought to expose Schuon and written what I have written out of revenge against him for taking away the woman I thought was my wife, I say they may think what they like. There is perhaps some small amount of truth to such an accusation, or I will at least consider that there is truth to it. But I must say in my own defense that there was a time when I loved Frithjof Schuon with all my heart and soul, and for two years I suppressed increasingly grave doubts about him. I tried to give the best interpretation to all he did, said, thought and wrote. I submitted to Frithjof Schuon even up to the point of almost sacrificing my life for him when he asked me to sacrifice myself. It

is not revenge that motivates me. It is the awareness that Schuon has betrayed me, betrayed God and betrayed all who believed in him. Corruptio optimi pessima: the corruption of the best is the worst. It is disappointment and not revenge that inspires me. It is disillusionment. He who I believed was a man greater and holier than all men is a hypocrite. But let me not dwell on this. God is no less wise if Frithjof Schuon is corrupt; the sky is no less blue; and the Blessed Virgin in all her infinite Mercy still looks down upon us with love and concern in her eyes, calling us beyond the world of false happiness and false prophets, and the grief and suffering of this life. I imagine her standing above me in Her blue cloak and under her beautiful gaze I bow my head and kneel down and ask Her for Mercy, both for myself and for all of us.

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All praise belongs to God.

#### APPENDIX SCHUON'S PERSON: DOCTRINE AND METHOD A PERSONAL ASSESSMENT

There are two positions taken by individuals familiar with the Schuon that I think are questionable: these are firstly, that there are two Schuons, the one who wrote the books and the other who is a selfish and immoral old man. The second is that one can reject the selfish megalomaniac person of Schuon but still hold to his method. In what follows I will address these two positions which really are one. What follows is my own opinion, and I may be wrong. My intention is to spur reflection about Schuon in the hopes that others, in view of the truth, will also question Schuon's doctrine and methods.

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In his article *The Nature and Function of the Spiritual Master* Schuon says in a footnote that "one of the worst abuses is the pretension of making a "psychological analysis of an Avatara." There are texts which express the same idea and I know from Sa. Amīnah that Schuon considers himself beyond such judgement. However this may be, it is clear that Schuon is not an Avatara, and though it would certainly be out of the question to subject Christ or Krishna to psychological analyses, in Schuon's case his error is so vast and his psychology so complex and bizarre that the making of such an analysis is more

than legitimate - however it must be made from a spiritual point of view. I hope that someone more qualified than myself will make this analysis. My attempt here is only to point to what I have learned of Schuon's person and ambition and deduce what is logical in regard to his psychology.

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When one reads Schuon's books one becomes mesmerized by the truths of the traditional doctrines discussed in them, and one transfers one's awe and reverence for these doctrines, legitimate in themselves, to Schuon. In this way, many people mesmerized by Schuon's books, end up mesmerized by Schuon himself. Many of the doctrines used in these books do indeed come from God and reflect the divine Intellect, but Schuon has used these doctrines, and, indeed, uses God, to assimilate all of the religions to himself. Schuon has made himself a new religion of which he is the sole unique prophet and exemplar.

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The trajectory of Schuon's life, his 26 books, his paintings, all indicate an individualistic ambition which assimilates all the world's religions and all that is sacred to Schuon himself. Schuon thus sets himself from his first to his last book as embodying *The Transcendent Unity of Religions*. One could not have imagined such an ambition to be possible, and indeed, one cannot recall any individual whose ambition has been so vast and universalist. Such a totalitarian claim needs to be a heresy not just against one religion, but against them all.

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In his books, Schuon has created an impersonal persona, if this expression be allowed, which in fact is a pose which dissimulates Schuon's totalitarian individualism. He seems to be writing as if from above the religions he discusses and this gives the appearance of a disinterested egolessness; but in fact, he has put himself above all the religions because he really believes he is beyond them, and this explains his often cold and despising tone. He despises the tradition which he uses to exalt himself. Schuon told me himself that he is the pole or qutb (center) of the age around which everything revolves. The world, the religions, the universe, all center on Schuon the Avatara, the "deified man," as he calls himself, and it is this exaltation of himself which enables him to identify himself with the divine Intellect, and thus to discriminate and judge all matters, great or small, which come before his self-proclaimed infallibility. He cannot be wrong he claims, because all that is spiritual belongs to him. All the prophets, he

claims, have come to him in visions, Al-Khidr, the mysterious Immortal recognize him, so he claims, and he claims the Blessed Virgin gave him her body. The devil tells 9 truths in order to tell one lie: Schuon's lie is not only in his books, it is above all in Schuon himself.

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Many of Schuon's articles are in fact narcissistic and self-reflective: his books are not as disinterested as they seem. Schuon both as a man and an author discriminates in order to denigrate, and by denigrating, he exalts himself. This power of discrimination is never exercised towards his own ambition, and this in itself proves the fundamental error of his ambition.

As I mentioned earlier, *The Mystery of the Prophetic Substance* is in fact about himself. So is *The Mystery of the Bodhisattva* and *The Wisdom of S. Isa* - these represent "the play of masks." Indeed, all the essays about the themes, such as *The Synthesis of the Paramitas* and *The Stations of Wisdom* are about himself since he believes that the six themes are his own spiritual portrait. But while these articles are-or less directly about himself, all the articles in his books are much more self-concerned than one's first impression would lead one to believe. For instance, all his articles on the difference between esoterism and exoterism have the ultimate implication that there is no plenary esoterism but Schuon himself. In a similar way, his articles on Islam and Sufism ultimately point to his own transcendence of Islam and Sufism.

Secondary articles, such as *Sedes Sapientiae*, indicate Schuon's relationship to with the Blessed Virgin in a veiled manner. Schuon identifies himself with Solomon and Schuon identifies the throne of Solomon with the Blessed Virgin, who, like the throne, gives him ease and signifies his station and authority. *Again, observe the metaphysical vanity of this analogy.*

I should note here that Schuon's identification with Solomon goes back to his first book, *The Transcendent Unity of the Religions*. In this book, as in all his books, Schuon identifies himself with the great prophets. It is his belief in himself as embodying the universal, Immanent Prophet, that allows him to believe that he has the right to sexual union with the Blessed Virgin, Mother of all the Prophets, as Schuon sees her. One can see already the basic liniments of this idea in the union of Schuon and the Virgin in his essay *The Koranic Message of S. Isa*. Isa, and Achmed are Schuon's Islamic names, and together, he believes, they signify his station as the Paraclete and the Immanent Logos. Schuon's second wife wrote a series of meditations on these themes of Schuon's right to union with the Virgin and his prophetic function. These can be made available. There are those who can accept these comparisons just as there are those who can accept that Schuon is like Solomon, but for my part, having seen Schuon at close quarters, he is anything but a prophet, or even a

saint, much less an embodiment of Atma or the Holy spirit. To the contrary, these comparisons are part of his pathology.

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If I had not come into close contact with Schuon, and therefore enabled to learn about his personal behavior, I would have continued to be fooled by the presumption of his books and his method. It was only seeing at close quarters the lying, demagoguery and psychological illness of Schuon and those around him that proved to me his falsity. Schuon is unquestionably a genius, but as Dr. Coomaraswamy said, quoting his father, "Lucifer was the first genius."

Schuon seems to me to be possessed by a pseudo-spiritual mythomania whereby he coopts sacred persons, concepts and stories as he reshapes them to the needs of his own psychology.

In many places in Schuon's books he seeks to dissimulate the relation between intelligence and pride. But in Schuon's posture and behavior there is nothing more evident than his pride. This is apparent even in the countless photographs of him. I recall that when I would have interviews with Schuon, I felt no grace in his presence, and even before I met him, I would read his books and wonder, but where is God? I doubted and suppressed these intuitions, but now I see, there is no grace, nor true love in this man. God is not with him precisely because of his pride. Yes, Schuon is an intellectual genius; he has enormous powers of discrimination, but as one remembers from Genesis, the devil gave the apple to Adam and Eve from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, with the promise, "ye shall be as gods." Schuon has the need to be worshipped as a god and one is aware when one sees him worshiped in such a manner, especially by his women, that this is a man who may have enormous powers of intellectual discrimination, but he is really a weak pitiful and corrupt old man who needs constant adulation to bolster a false pride. He is a man incapable of love and because, humanly speaking, his intellectual pride has emptied him of the capacity for love, he requires absolute adoration and loyalty of those around him as if the possession of such power over his admiring worshipers could compensate for his own human weakness and emptiness.

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If one looks at all the books, life, paintings, and texts of Schuon *grosso modo*, what does one see? One sees a man who has tried to synthesize in himself all that is great and profound. Firstly, he has set himself up as the summit of all religions, indeed, more than this, as the quintessence of the



religions, but even beyond this, as the Superformal embodiment of pure metaphysic and esoterism. He has made himself the Prophet of all prophets, the AVatara who summarizes all the other Avatars. He considers himself the Primordial Norm at the end of time. He is the King-Pontiff - the bridge between Heaven and men. Since he is the Man of all men, and thus Hamsa, beyond caste, beyond all laws and peoples, beyond religious and social or moral forms, he is the infallible, amoral determiner of all that there is. Thus he creates in his books and his tariqa, or so he claims, a quintessential civilization based upon an Anthropological theory he himself has created. This Anthropology has himself as its model and exemplar, and from himself he derives his theory of quintessential castes and types. His anthropology, moreover, determines who is and who is not qualified for his spiritual method. His spiritual method in turn, which mixes various Hindu, Buddhist, Christian and Islamic elements together with his own psychology, is primarily a theory of the virtues which seeks to replicate in a disciple the spiritual growth or state of Schuon himself. His method is therefore heavily colored by his own psychology. This is indicated by the fact that the highest expression of his method, the Alchemy and the 7th theme, that is, his tantric and existential Alchemy, have as their basis Schuon's own belief in the deified nature of his own body. As Sa. Amīnah told me many times, Schuon's body and the divine Name are more less the same thing. Thus one can say that Schuon's method leads ultimately to Schuon himself, and it is this which makes the method questionable, and not only this, but not practicable. This is not because the heterogeneous elements of his method taken from diverse traditions are therefore compromised: Japa is still Japa; tantra is still tantra; the virtues are still the virtues. Rather, Schuon's syncretic and heterodox assimilation of these elements into a pseudo-esoteric method cannot be admitted as valid nor practiced with impunity. In other words what is legitimate in Schuon's doctrine and method can be found elsewhere. One does not need Schuon or his method to practice pure prayer, and moreover, to practice pure prayer under Schuon involves one in dangerous deviations which are part of Schuon himself.

It should also be noted that Schuon has created not only a metaphysic, an anthropology, a social "civilization," a psychology and a spiritual method, but also a cosmology which justifies and services these other concerns. This cosmology, on the one hand, he derives from his metaphysic, and on the other, from his anthropology. These doctrines are contained in such articles as *Seeing God Everywhere*, *The Structure and Universality of the Conditions of Existence* and *The Universal Categories*. Schuon himself told me that this last essay is the greatest thing ever written on this subject and that such an article could not appear sooner in history, but rather it was providential that it be revealed at this time. *The Mystery of Subjectivity* - that is Schuon's own subjectivity, has become the pole and center of all the "conditions of existence." All that exists, exists for Schuon and leads to or away from him. Thus, since all things either go toward or head away from Schuon, one is saved or damned according to his schemas, or his analyses of the afterlife, as in his *Universal Eschatology*.

We will say something of Schuon's aesthetics shortly, but what needs to be said here is that the vastness of Schuon's scope must be recognized. One cannot think of a similar system builder since Hegel, but even Hegel was not so total, nor did he presume to be an Avatara, Alexander the Great, the divine Lover like Krishna, and the world's greatest artist and King, all rolled into one. Assuming one could take all this seriously, then "not even Solomon in all his glory" could be as great as Schuon. But this is of course absurd, and Schuon is not Solomon, although he likes to compare himself to him.

What is characteristic of Schuon's method and doctrine is that it inculcates pride in his followers. One reads Schuon's books and feels one has become an instant metaphysician; in the method one feels one practices the quintessential method of all religions. I have found that those who still hold to Schuon's method and doctrine, despite knowing of Schuon's decadence as a person, do so, I believe, precisely because of this pride. Schuon's system inflates the ego of his disciples so, as one of them said to me, they feel "as if on a mountain top" of knowledge. Thus, for Schuon's followers to legitimately question Schuon's method and doctrine is to question their own interests, their own investment, their own ego. "A tree is known by its fruits" and the fruit of Schuon's doctrine and method is a stubborn elitism, a self-defensive arrogance, and a refusal to inquire into the legitimacy of Schuon's system. This amounts to a denial of the truth in favor of self-complacency, or self-interest. If Schuon's system were really true, one would welcome and even encourage all questions which seek to test its validity. This is not done, and veil upon veil of secrecy and self-defenciveness is used to deflect all legitimate questions. This is characteristic of a cult, and reminds one of the Pharisees who walked to the other side of the road rather than look at the sickness of the man lying in the gutter. Schuon is a sick man and this sickness inheres in his system and method. It is like an inversion of St. Peter's denial of Christ. Peter, speaking of Christ said "I do not know this man." Schuon's disciples say "I know the man is a prophet" while denying the logical consequences of the facts which prove he is not.

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Schuon, in various articles, discusses the differences between Bhakti and Jnana, always speaking rather disparagingly in regard to the former. His "gnostic" emphasis on intellectual discrimination involves a derogation of the human which is accompanied by an arrogant pride. One could speculate that Schuon inherited this tendency to despise others and exalt himself from Guenon who had a similar tendency.

In Schuon, like Guenon, one sees a certain paranoid self-exaltation and an emphasis on a cold jnana which ends in an acidic despising of others.

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In various essays Schuon has said that the Bhakta needs love, the jnana needs beauty. One sees at the primordial gatherings this formulation realized. He dehumanizes and deindividualizes some 30 women and uses their beauty to exalt himself. There is a fundamental error here and one must conclude in deference to authentic jnana or bhakta, such as they might exist in any religion, that Schuon has somehow misunderstood and misused these concepts, just as he has misused his women. One must also conclude that Schuon has incorrectly situated Beauty. I offer this reflection to stimulate inquiry into this subject in more detail.

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In an interview Schuon told me that the Intellect is manifested passively in contemplation and that Ramakrishna and Sri Ananda Moyi Ma typify this. Actively, the intellect manifests as discernment, and he cited Shankara and Guenon as typical of this. He said he is the great rarity that embodies both these modes. The vainglory of such a formulation necessarily brings into question his understanding of the Intellect as well as his use of it. Since the concept of the Intellect and the related concept of Esoterism are both central to Schuon's system, I question the very core of his system. I do not answer this question, but once again only wish to raise it for others to consider. While the perennial wisdom no doubt exists, since God exists, Schuon's esoterism appears to be merely an inflated individualistic pseudo-synthesis. *this is not to say that the Intellect does not exist; rather, that if the Intellect is what leads one to God, Schuon has betrayed this Intellect.*

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Schuon quotes St. Irenaeus who said "God became man (Christ) in order that man might become God." He assimilates this patristic formula to Hinduism and says "Atma became Maya that Maya might become Atma." Now, Maya and Christ are not the same thing. While meaning creation, or the created order in general, Maya is an ambiguous concept. Moreover, maya has a descending aspect as well as an ascending one. It is the descending or illusory aspect of Maya which allows Schuon to identify himself with Atma, and which leads him both to a megalomania and an abuse of young girls. Schuon's use of the Vedantic theory of Atma-Maya is almost certainly in error, and moreover he has certainly reduced the patristic Christian formula to a parody.

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Though many have desired to separate them, Schuon's doctrine, method and person cannot be separated. Schuon's method is essentially the six themes combined with the invocation of the divine Name. Both the divine Name

and the six themes he has identified with himself. I told the story earlier of how he realized that the six themes represent the form of the prophet and the prophet is Schuon (Cf. *Mystery of the Prophetic Substance*). Thus, the six themes which derive partly from the six paramitas of Buddhism, as well as the six directions of the American Indians (the compass), express the six essential virtues or spiritual "divine presences" and are, in Schuon's own estimation his personal "spiritual portrait." Schuon's portrait, a subject that seems to concern him particularly, is in summation, the Atma.

Schuon's method is one of ascent, beginning with the first theme, Purity, and ending with the sixth which identity or union. The sixth theme then is divided into 3 parts: called the Alchemy, wherein the mind in itself, the heart in itself, and the body in itself are identified with God through the agency of the divine Name. The Alchemy in turn gives way to something called the Seventh Theme which is existential, sexual or tantric. It is the domain of adoration or existential repose in non-thinking being. there is, beyond this, a domain of sexual techniques which Sa. Amīnah taught me, but as I now doubt their legitimacy and do not wish them to be imitated, I will not speak of them.

In any case, though the six themes as a basis for meditation may not in themselves be harmful - though the 5th and 6th themes may well be questionable - Schuon has through the six (or seven) themes and the Alchemy, identified himself with the Immanent Presence of God, and this has led him to consider himself an Avatara. And this in turn has made him believe himself equal to the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit, and this in turn makes possible for him sexual union in his heart with the Blessed Virgin. This false vision, in turn has led to Schuon's cult of nudity, his belief in the divinity of his avataric body, and thereby to the Primordial Gatherings wherein as Atma Schuon arrogates to himself the right to come into quasi-sexual union with thirty or so naked women, the wives of other men and young girls included.

Here then is where Schuon's methods lead, and since "the tree is known by its fruits" one is forced logically to not only doubt, but reject Schuon's method. If Schuon's method has led him to the vision of the false Virgin and the Primordial Gatherings, it clearly cannot be a viable method. No method is viable which leads to blasphemy against the Virgin, crimes against young girls and in general to a spiritual decadence and a pathology in Schuon's own person and psychology which is morally appalling and spiritually syncratic and corrupt.

...

Schuon's abuse of the method of Invocation does not invalidate the methods of Invocation such as they exist in legitimate traditions. Likewise, the Buddhist theory of the six Paramitas remains intact, even if Schuon has coopted this and similar spiritual methodologies and turned them to his own use. In a

similar way, the Vedantic theory of Atma-Maya is not invalidated by Schuon's syncretic abuse of it in the Primordial Gatherings, nor is the essential Vedantic doctrine of discrimination between the Real and the unreal or illusory made invalid by Schuon's self-interested abuse of the faculty of discrimination. Rather, one must now discriminate between the Real and the illusory in regard to Schuon himself, and one must ultimately forget Schuon and concentrate on God.

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There must certainly be a perennial wisdom, a wisdom that is always, everywhere and true, for such wisdom is God Himself. But that Schuon represents this wisdom is completely out of the question. I have seen, in the Primordial Gatherings, and in Schuon's own person, that he has betrayed the legitimate rites and doctrines of not only the American Indians, but also of Islamic and Hindu doctrines and methods. Rama Coomaraswamy tells me moreover that Schuon's understanding of the essential Eucharistic rite of Christianity is Protestant (see *Evidence and Mystery in Logic and Transcendence*). The same can be said of his equating Protestant sects as being on a par with Roman Catholicism and the Orthodox Churches.

*Wolfgang Smith has expressed doubts as to whether Schuon's interpretations of the Christian Trinity are in all respects acceptable.* He also tells me that Schuon's essays on science are presumptuous and uninformed. This latter is a complex subject about which I am not qualified to comment.

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St. Thomas Aquinas said that an error in regard to the Creation will inevitably lead to an error with regard to the nature of God. So mutatis mutandis, Schuon's errors, such as those related to the Blessed Virgin, or the syncretic Primordial Gatherings, must represent errors in regard to his thinking about God. His metaphysics must therefore be faulty. Dr. Smith was speculating that Schuon's error may be akin to the Gnostic heresy. I suspect a fundamental error but do not know at this point just what it is. It is clear however that Schuon's global error is to have identified himself with the transcendent unity of the religions.

One can say, in any case, that Schuon's system is syncretic and self-serving. Moreover, one can say, given his abuse of the Blessed Virgin, as well as the women and young girls in the tariqa, that there must be a fundamental error in his understanding of Femininity. (Cf. *The Problem of Sexuality, Mahashakti, The Feminine Element in Mahayana*.)



Schuon's notion of the intrinsic virtues, or intrinsic morality, sounds very good on paper. However, the practice of this on the part of Schuon himself is quite another matter. Schuon's notion of the intrinsic virtues becomes confused with Schuon's "nature" which he associates with "the nature of things." Thus Schuon's actions are "esoteric" which is synonymous in practice with his being beyond the law. This leads him to a kind of pseudo-tantrism whereby Schuon's need of "primordiality" or femininity as a consolation for Schuon becomes intrinsically moral. In this way he justifies the Primordial Gatherings. The error here is that "the nature of things" and Schuon's selfishness becomes confused. Moreover, Schuon has abused tantra. Tantrism, and one is here speaking of legitimate tantra, occurs as a highly organized religious set of rituals which are used only after years of preparation and under the strictest supervision. Tantrism has nothing whatever to do with Schuon's pressing himself against the breasts and hips of 14 year old American girls who are spiritually unprepared to understand this act, or to understand the supposedly divine nudity of an 84 year old man who embraces them in this manner. Thus Schuon's "intrinsic morality" is merely an irresponsible expediency which leads him to promote a false primordiality which is immoral on every level and according to the criteria of each and every religious tradition.

One can speak as much as one likes of "crazy wisdom" and "fools for God"; of heyokas and other examples of "backwards wisdom," but these concepts are precise exceptions which rarely occur, and when they do, in complex cultural and spiritual surroundings. IN Schuon's case one is not dealing with a man whose exterior actions are immoral while his "intrinsic" purpose is spiritual. One is dealing with spiritual errors which grow from a pathology in Schuon himself. This pathology stems from his belief that he is an Avatara, and this is nothing more than a kind of vanity and false pride reaching cosmic proportions. This leads him to create an ethics which in the end is anything but universal; Schuon's ethics serves Schuon and his community, and actively leads to the despising of anything and anyone not approved of by Schuon. Thus, Schuon arrogates to himself the right to break religious laws, beginning with Islamic laws; he illegitimately combines disparate religious forms and ideas, reduces the sacrament of marriage to the trivial, and having set himself up as being beyond the law, makes of himself the Atma which ought to be worshiped.

Schuon's notion of the "legitimate ego" or of "legitimate pride" has led him to identify humility with pride. Schuon cannot help it if he is an Avatara, and the Atma, and he sees it as humble submission to the truth for him on his part to admit and accept this as a fact.

The notion of charity is reduced in Schuon's own words to : "charity belongs only to those who deserve it." In practice this means that Schuon's group only gives alms to themselves. Thus, as an act of charity, Sa. Badriyah is

given a house and hundreds of thousands of dollars - much of it the fruits of *alms* or Zikat by duped followers.

These abuses grow directly out of Schuon's theory of the virtues and this theory is essential to his method. This is not to say that Schuon may not have said some true things in his books and texts about the virtues. It is to say that his methodology logically leads to real errors. *To practice his method is to open oneself to these errors.*

Christ said he came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it. Schuon, in setting himself up as beyond the "law and the prophets" makes a mockery of both.

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I do not wish to seem to desire to blanketly condemn all aspects of Schuon's work. Rather I wish to point out that what is legitimate in Schuon's work has little to do with Schuon himself. In the domain of aesthetics, for instance, he speaks many a truth. But these truths are derived from Christian, Buddhist, Hindu and Islamic aesthetics which he merely assimilates. Schuon's error on the aesthetic level enters in where these traditional theories are combined with and colored by Schuon's personal psychology. This is nowhere more apparent than in Schuon's own art work, where he combines traditional styles with his own obsessional and sexual psychic concerns which transform traditional styles into a syncretic porno-spiritual iconography - if such a phrase is permissible.

I know that Schuon would himself say of me that it is some moralism or psychic trauma on my part that makes me reject his aesthetic, his vision of the Virgin, and his Primordial Gatherings. This is what he always says in such situations. He would plead his purity, since "to the pure all things are pure." However, this is mere self-justification on his part. It is precisely because I studied painting with Schuon and because I assimilated the "esoteric" meaning of these paintings that I reject his aesthetic. It is not moralism on my part. I greatly admire Hindu temple sculpture for instance. but I reject Schuon's Virgins, think his portraits of himself are grotesque at best, and consider his Hindu and American Indian painting, for the most part, and especially those painted by Sa. Badriyah and himself, to be betrayals of these traditions. Schuon is an opportunist who uses all religions to make himself greater and greater. Lastly, the fact that he has his disciples and even children pray to these "icons" of himself and the Virgin is a certain proof to me, not only of the falsity of Schuon's aesthetic, but also of his method and way.

Schuon's tariqa is called the tariqa Maryamiah, and since the word tariqa means Way, it is the Way of the Blessed Virgin Mary. However, since the vision of the Virgin Schuon claims to have had is certainly false, it follows that his claim to have been "adopted" by the Virgin is also false. The tariqa is therefore not Maryamiah, not of the Virgin.

Given these false visions, given the questionable nature of Schuon's method, given the decadence of Schuon's character and life, his false marriages, his despising of others, his demagoguery and ambition, given the decadent and syncretic nature of the Primordial Gatherings as well as the global error of his doctrine and his setting himself up as an Avatara; given all these factors, one must conclude in good conscience that Schuon's tariqa is not a tariqa, and that such being the case, the master, the doctrine and the method cannot be acceptable or legitimate.

All this last section is written as an opinion of the writer in the hopes that the good of the spiritual lives of those touched by Schuon may be served. May God guide us towards a truly good and straight path.

All praise belongs to God, and may He have mercy on us.

## APPENDIX

In what follows I offer Schuon's own words regarding Primordial Gatherings. These words, taken out of articles written in the last year, will eventually be available. These articles are entitled as follows: *Ex Nihilo, In Deo; The Liberating Passage; The Play of Masks; In the Tracks of Original Sin; and Man in the Cosmogonic Projection.*

"Man, we have said, has been placed in the world so that there be in it someone who can return to God. This is what is suggested, among other signs, by that "supernaturally natural" theophany that is the human body: man being imago Dei, his body necessarily symbolizes a liberating return to the divine origin and in this sense it is "remembrance of God." It is true that the noble animal - such as the stag, the lion, the eagle, the swan -- also expresses a given aspect of the diving Majesty, but it does not manifest the liberating return of the form to the Essence; it remains in the form, whence its "horizontalty." The human body on the contrary is "vertical"; it is a sacrament, whether it be masculine or feminine; the difference of the sexes marks a complementarity of mode and not, quite clearly, a divergence of principle. Sacred nudity -- in India for example -- expresses the exteriorization of that which is most interior and correlatively the interiorization of that which is most exterior; "and that is why, naked I dance," as Lalla Yogishwari said, after having realized the immanent Self. extremes meet; the natural form can be the vehicle of the supernatural essence, and the latter can be manifested by the former."

"Mentalities having little familiarity with the processes of symbolism might contest the physical deformity of man by arguing, for example, that God has neither a frontal nor a posterior side and that He could not walk since He is immutable. This is obvious when one takes things literally, but it is important to understand that the incommensurable levels of the points of comparison do not abolish analogy nor consequently symbolism. The posterior side, which may be in question here, is none other than Maya inasmuch as it separates Being from non-Being; the frontal side is Being inasmuch as it conceives the possibilities to be projected into the space of *Maya*; and God's walk is that very projection. Being, since it pertains to *Maya*, turns its back on Beyond-Being while remaining united with it in respect of the Essence; and it turns its face towards *Maya* by the very fact that it existentiates the potentialities that will make up the world. Finally we would say that the Creator's progression is noble..."

Whatever truths may be expressed in these passages, I was with Sa. Amīnah when these articles were written and I know for a fact that Schuon is here speaking of himself, and he is trying to define and justify all the various aspects of the new rites he was then inventing and elaborating.

He is speaking here of his own body primarily which is supposed to "symbolize the liberation return to the divine origin." He compares himself to the "noble animals," those he uses to symbolize himself in his paintings.

Then, after discussing Sacred Nudity, a concept Schuon has culled from various traditions, but which Schuon has certainly abused by mixing it with his own psychology - after discussing sacred nudity, he implicitly claims realization of the Immanent Self, since both he and Sa. Badriyah have identified themselves with and indeed, co-opted, Lyalla Yogashwari. The he speaks of the front and back sides of the body in terms of Atma-Maya. This is important because of Schuon's own behavior at the Primordial Gatherings. When Schuon is in the circle of 30 naked women, approximately, he walks, or rather struts, like a proud peacock, like a lion among admiring females, indeed, as if he were a god. Schuon's walk is like "God's walk" and Schuon is imitating or play acting the Creator Himself. This play act however, Schuon takes quite seriously; Schuon represents God Himself, whose "divine virility" is thrust upon and comes into union with the 30 women who collectively represent Maya, the receptive substance through which God's potency is manifest and through whose admiring eyes Schuon is able to see himself as God.

Thus Schuon denies that this is a rite publicly, in fact he has made his body a sacrament, or rather, a pseudo-sacrament and he parades himself as if he were Atma or God Himself.

"The motionless mover -- as Aristotle said -- is none other than man who, being "made in the image of God" is open to the Absolute and to Deliverance. Man ipso facto represents the Immutable and the Unlimited, in the manner that the extreme limit of universal Manifestation renders possible; he represents these qualities potentially, indirectly and passively in the case of ordinary men, but effectively, directly and actively in the case of deified man; he is then central, not only -- like every man -- with respect to the animal world, but also, in a particular manner and in addition, with respect to the multitude of ordinary men. The "believers" are like the gopis dancing around Krishna and uniting with him; while he -- the "motionless mover" -- plays his salvific flute."

"To say that the deified man has the function of the motionless mover with regard to a human collectivity, means implicitly that it is Revelation, Tradition, the divine Symbol, or the sacred in general, that represents this mover. We will mention as examples of the Symbol -- or symbolism -- the circumambulation of the Kaaba, primordial sanctuary; in this rite the movement is circular like the revolution of the planets; another example is the Sun Dance around a tree representing the axis Heaven-Earth; the movement is then alternatively centripetal and centrifugal like the phases of respiration, which brings us back to the dance of the gopis with its two modes, circumambulation and union precisely. The universal symbol of the wheel combines both types of participation, which finally refer to the two fundamental relationships between



**Atma and Maya, the analogical and the unitive: manifestation of diversifying Potentiality and reintegration into the original Synthesis."**

In these quotations we see Schuon's ego in all its vainglory. Here he identifies himself with Aristotle's "motionless Mover." From this false assimilation, since Aristotle never identified the motionless Mover with a man, Schuon calls himself the "diefied man." Moreover, with enormous pride, Schuon puts himself up above all men. Then he identifies himself with Krishna, and in doing so, identifies the gopis as "uniting with him," despite the fact that he publicly denies any sexual element in this rite. Here, in his own words, he admits it.

Then, in the next paragraph he compares himself to the Kaaba, the Sun Dance Tree, and Krishna again, as well as the point around which the planets revolve. No order of greatness is too great to compare himself to.

The operative metaphysical idea in these gatherings is Atma (Schuon) becomes Maya (the naked women) in order that Maya might become Atma; This is Schuon's central doctrine. It is a paraphrase of a Christian idea wherein "God became man in order that man might become God." There is then implicitly an identification between himself and the Logos, who is Christ as the Word. This is of course, nothing short of blasphemy.

If I remember correctly Schuon worked out all these ideas and analogies in Dec. or Jan. of 90-91. Sa. Amīnah told me at this time, all of these things, as he discusses such ideas with her and Sa. Badriyah during their "visits."

"The divine symbol, by definition, is paradoxically ambiguous: on the one hand, it "is god" -- this is its reason for being -- and on the other hand, it "is not God" -- this is its earthly materiality; it is "image" because it is manifestation and not principle, and it is participating emanation and liberating sacrament because it is *Atma in Maya*. The human body in itself -- not in a given diminished form -- is sacrament-symbol because it is "made in the image of God": this is why it is the object of love par excellence; not to the exclusion of the soul that inhabits it, but together with this soul, for the human body has its form only in virtue of the content for which it is made. The body invites to adoration by its very theomorphic form, and this is why it can convey a celestial and in principle, saving presence; but, as Plato suggests, this presence is accessible only to the soul that is contemplative and not dominated by passion, and independently of the question of knowing whether it is an ascetic or a married person involved. Sexuality does not mean animality, except with fallen, thus infra-human, man; with the properly human man, sexuality is determined by that which constitutes man's prerogative, and bears witness to it, precisely, the theomorphic form of his body.

And this brings us back to our distinction between the Essence and the Substance: the masculine pole refers to the essentiality and to transcendence, and the feminine pole, to substantiality and immanence. The trajectory toward the Sovereign Good -- which is at once the Absolute and the Infinite -- necessarily comprises masculine as well as feminine modes so to speak; moreover, Truth pertains to Rigor and Justice, and the Path to Gentleness and Mercy. In loving woman, man fundamentally loves infinitude and goodness; in loving man, woman fundamentally loves Absoluteness and Power; the Universe being woven of geometry and musicality, of strength and beauty. We have said above that transcendence means discontinuity between the Principle and its manifestation, and immanence means continuity: it is thus that divine Virility is thrust upon us, with the implacability of the nature of things, of principles deriving from the Immutable, and that divine Femininity on the contrary grants to us, with all the freedom at Love's disposal, the imponderable graces that bring about the miracle of Salvation.

In the above quotation we see Schuon using a term he often used in his book *The Eye of the Heart*; the phrase "the divine symbol" referred in this book to the Divine Name, but here the Name has become Schuon's body, which he calls a "sacrament-symbol," "the object of love par excellence." If one could see how ridiculous and even rather grotesque this 84 year old man looks in his "primordial" costume, one certainly could never imagine him as "the object of love par excellence."

Following this Schuon then employs one of his more sophisticated forms of double-speak. He says implicitly that he is the object of love, which all of the women at the gatherings should love (and amazingly enough, they do love him) and thus should be adored, since he embodies God, or is god, and therefore he can heal the soul with the "saving presence" of his body. I remember that when Sa. M told me of Schuon's attempt to seduce her and she rejected him, he accused her, in some letters he wrote to Titus Bruckhardt, of not being qualified to receive the blessing of his body. Here one sees the double-speak. It is Schuon's "prerogative" to have all women since he is the "dified man" (as he had already implied in his article entitled *The Problem of Sexuality*). Thus he masks his extraordinary egotism with the term "adoration" and excuses his mania for pressing himself against some 30 naked women on the grounds that it is an act of "adoration" rather like men who look at Playboy magazine say they do so because the articles in it are so good.

Having thus excused himself and defined his "prerogative," Schuon goes on to define femininity and masculinity. He identifies himself with Absoluteness and Power and says that "Divine Virility is thrust upon us" as if he can't help it that God has made him the perfect Man and Avatara that all women should adore. Then he says that the women grant to him "the imponderable graces" that bring about the miracle of salvation." Sa. Amīnah often told me that Schuon sees the breasts, hips and private parts of women as embodying God's Mercy. Thus at the Primordial Gatherings Schuon is acquiring as much "divine mercy" as he can, and he can't help it, since the "divine Virility" is thrust upon

him. I do not mean here to sound ironic, but rather only seek to unmask Schuon's use of language.

"Meister Eckhart wrote somewhere that every meal has a sacramental import for souls deeply united to God; thus pleasure, to the extent of its effectiveness, excludes the mechanism of passional falling away, whether the person involved be a hermit or polygamous. 'Water takes on the color of its receptacle,' says Al-Junayd, which implies that pleasure takes on the nature of the an enjoying it; in other words, the nature of the subject determines the relationship between the subject and the object."

In the above quotation one sees again the strange mixture of the highest metaphysics and Schuon's vainglorious psychology. Schuon's "adoration" has now become pleasure, the only pleasure an impotent 84 year old man can have, and sexual pleasure has become for Schuon looking at and pressing himself against as many naked women as possible. He is allowed this in his own estimation because, also in his own estimation, he is a god-man and since "pleasure takes on the nature of the man enjoying it" and Schuon is the greatest saint, prophet and Avatara there is, he can do anything he wants, he is beyond the law.

Sa. Aminah told me that Schuon needs femininity in order to live, and indeed, my impression of watching Schuon at these gatherings was of a man starved for nudity, starved for the satisfaction of the illusion of his own greatness. Sa. Aminah said these gatherings keep Schuon alive. These gatherings are a perverse criminal and heretical combination of Schuon's metaphysics and his sexual fantasies. His Vision of the Virgin is also a combination of sexual fantasy and metaphysics. These gatherings, like Schuon's "vision" bring into question his entire system, his doctrine, method, and person. Certainly Schuon was great, but he ought to be remembered only as the most brilliant false master and prophet ever to appear in the history of spirituality.

Obviously, one cannot take any of this seriously, but even if one hypothetically supposed Schuon were a "Diefied Man," this writer does not believe that there is a single woman Schuon unites with or a single man who witnesses these Primordial Gatherings, who would be truly capable of assimilating metaphysical truths through these kinds of symbolic forms. The people at these gatherings are not Tibetan Buddhists who have been in monasteries for 30 years contemplating the mysteries of the Mahamudra; they are American And European wives and husbands with jobs, and children, who know nothing of Schuon's vainglorious fantasies. Schuon's Primordial Gatherings are therefore not simply vainglorious syncretic parodies; they are spiritually irresponsible and dangerous heresies.

"To this mode of cosmic projection that is the human phenomenon there is added a so to speak secondary but intrinsically central mode, namely the avataric mode, the "divine descent," the incarnation; supreme mode of the projection of *Atma-Maya*. In the framework of fallen humanity, and owing to this fall, the initial human projection is repeated by the *Avatara* in order to reestablish equilibrium and to restore to man his first vocation; it is to this that the symbolism of the dance of the *gopis* around Krishna testifies."

"The play of Krishna with the Gopis refers to the masks; the apparition of his immutable form before Arjuna refers to the divine Substance. This form, reflected in *Maya*, assumed in its turn innumerable masks, not earthly but celestial."

Here, in these final quotes, one against sees Schuon claiming to be a "divine descent" and he situates his Primordial Gatherings in this context. All souls are "gopis" in relation to Schuon, and though men can't participate, they can watch their wives and daughter's breasts and hips being embraced by Schuon and thereby saved. Here we see then: Schuon has become a parody of an Avatara, and whatever truths his doctrine and method may contain, these truths have become grotesque and are used like a mask to hide Schuon's pathology.

## THE MESSAGE OF THE ICONS

by Sa. Badriyah

In the most direct of the Tantric icons of the Blessed Virgin, (on whom be blessings) one is irresistibly attracted to her and she in return enters into one's heart. The viewer and the image are one. For centuries the Blessed Virgin has been saving souls and at this moment she offers her most precious gift by giving us her body in a powerfully direct way. Beginning with the adoption of our Shaykh on the voyage to Morocco in 1965, the Blessed virgin has chosen a most intimate way of revealing herself. One could even say that she is her Revelation. These icons are an exact replication of her message to the Shaykh on the ship, both in standing and in kneeling, and they have been given to us. Our participation is a powerful descent of her mercy and a glorious ascent into Paradise.

Three of Schuon's poems from the 1930's are reproduced. One sees in them already the elements of the Primordial Gatherings - Krishna, gopis, sexual union, and a rather heavy sexual-spiritual atmosphere. Sidi Abdul Kafi translated these poems at my request with no attempt to be poetic. I asked him to do so because I wanted to know what they said. I showed them to Sa. Hamidah who destroyed the copies I gave her and asked me to promise never to show them to anyone, as they are "compromising to the Shaykh." I see no reason to keep this promise any longer as in fact, they express something fundamental about Schuon.

## GOPI

Thou walkest,  
proud, young striding  
spring songs along thy  
limbs are gliding.  
Thoughts of spring along  
thy body glide.  
While thou walkest  
Thy breasts move (bounce?)  
Oh, the living poem of thy body,  
is held in the rounded cradle  
of thy beautiful hips;  
and from the sweetness of thy life  
thy dreaming face is glowing.

## BAJADERE

A red gold noon sultry and broad  
over the pregnant earth blowing with desire,  
and the massive waters of the Ganges  
glistening.  
in an ecstasy of death and beatitude.

The silver bangles of the Devadassis (temple prostitutes)  
are ringing,  
in the smile and promise of her lustful dance.  
So her body laughs and  
her limbs are winding like snakes.



And the God's kiss her dark cheeks,  
and her body is liberated through dance

and her mouth laughs,  
teeth white like pearls.

While the sacrificed animal cries in its own  
blood and the garlands of  
flowers are resplendent and fragrant.

And she bathes her heated breasts  
in the tumbling infinitude  
of the Ganges.

### **KRISHNA AND RADHA**

My love was the gentle ring which circled caressing,  
around your body, like a round dance.  
And you extended (displayed?) your body  
before me, on dark mosses spread out,  
heavily breathing like a wild animal.

And your breasts proudly expanded and  
you were not a woman any longer  
nor a mere ornament, but a  
golden mirror in which a God  
prepares himself (unclear translation)

Oh you most wonderful being, I followed  
you into the stillness of the woods  
and you turned, smiling into my will,  
and heavy and sweet,  
you were hanging in my arms.

And you embraced me in love (dreamlike)  
like a cup ready to be filled  
and I was the drink you received  
and then you were breathing quietly  
and like a browned grape

our body hung one me  
and I held you as the vine does the grape.

Oh beloved, I would like to  
rock (cradle?) you until you  
fade into me  
becoming eternal  
and I merge into you.

The following documents are, firstly Sa. Amīnah's and my letters to Schuon. We thought of ourselves as already married but she didn't want to shock Schuon too much. My earlier drafts of this letter were different and the changes were made by her. But these details are really not necessary here.

Secondly, there is a love letter from Sa. Amīnah to myself which I would not include because of its personal nature, but it speaks of the fact that she had "to talk me into it" - i.e., the relationship. Whereas Inverness currently lies and says the relationship was a result of my initiative. The "Butterthief" is me. Butter is Sa. Amīnah, a figure or metaphor taken from the story of Krishna who was called a Butter thief as a child.

Dearest Butterthief,

Having been stolen by you three or four months ago melted me almost entirely - it is only barely - barely that I can hold a pen. I have been so loved, ~~that I have~~

~~that I have~~ - that there are no thoughts left to me except of you. I used to think I was hot or cold or solid or melted - now all is one to me - with the One too. And so thou seest that I am thin and made for thee; what wilt thou have done with me?

All my love,

P.S. It was so wonderful for you to get stolen by you - I celebrate the day it happened - <sup>Butler</sup> often\*

to talk you into it!

Dec 13 1910

Most Holy and Beloved Shaykh,

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

For sometime I have longed for your blessing upon my friendship or intentions to marry Sayyidah Amīnah. However, she has told me that I could not ask you this but that you would certainly bless us from paradise. She says I may now ask you.

I have longed to tell you that I would do all that I could to be worthy of her and good to her and to treat her always as the sacred vessel that you have made of her. I have longed to ask your permission for her hand.

I have prayed to the Blessed Virgin everyday that She might tell you of this matter and that She might assure me that I am in no way disloyal to you or to God by loving her Sayyidah Amīnah.

as possible in order to be sure that (2)  
I <sup>have</sup> no motive except it be one that  
honors, respects and venerates you. In  
all the history of Mankind there is  
no one I respect as highly as you. I  
have prayed that if ever I did  
anything that was not faithful, good,  
beautiful and true, in respect of you,  
that I might be corrected immediately  
and that I might submit to this  
correction without hesitation or complaint.

I know with my heart and I  
have seen with my eyes that the Blessed  
Virgin is all good and true and that  
Heaven shines through Her. I know  
She is beyond all alternations of grief  
and joy. I know she reflects the  
Self: and that you also reflect  
the Self, and therefore I know  
She looks upon you with eyes full of  
compassion and love; for She has  
made you Her own. I realized



the nature of your relation with the Holy Virgin when I was praying to you at a majlis when you were absent. I had a vision of you wherein I saw that like the Virgin you are a vehicle of Heaven, a vessel for the Self. From this, if I understood it, I knew that my love of Sayyidah Aminah must be intrinsically good, since it leads me to you and to God. I love you with all my heart and I do not love ~~you~~ Sayyidah Aminah outside of you. I see you in her soul, and as I praise and thank and adore you, so I praise and thank and adore her. I pledged myself to you and God at the initiation, and now I pledge myself to you again; with your permission and blessing I promise to treat

Sayyidah Aminah in a sacred manner (4)  
now and to the end of time

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

يَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ عَلَيْكَ السَّلَامُ ٦

فيصل

P.S. I append some quotations from the  
Book of Wisdom <sup>which</sup> describe how I feel  
about Sayyidah Aminah as well as  
a poem I wrote when I did not  
think it possible to ask for your  
blessing on earth.

## To Sayyidah Aminah.

Under the Mountain where the stream is clear  
I'll meet thee \* in the valley where the meadows are  
I'll come to thee leading a sacred white deer  
I'll be singing in the meadows of Bright Star.

\* \* \*

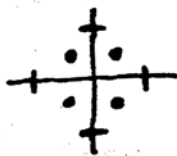
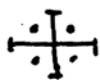
I'll meet thee on the mountain where the clouds are gold  
and we'll speak of the knowledge of the men of old  
who knew in their hearts and from afar  
that a prophet would come called Bright Star.

\* \* \*

I'll meet thee at the ocean when the world is gone  
I'll hold your dear face and sing you a song  
of how our hearts were joined both near and far  
joined forever in the Name of Bright Star.

\* \* \*

I'll meet you in heaven when time is gone  
I'll give you a white deer and a golden swan  
and we will bow our heads where the meadows are  
and receive The Blessing of our Master, Bright Star.



الحمد لله رب العالمين

Dearest Sheikheli,

I am writing to thee (or maybe I shall be giving this to Badriyyeli) as if thou wert in Paradise. I am not doing this for a "sad" reason; but only because it seems easy to imagine telling you certain things when this world is far below us.

If thou wert on a cloud as it were and if I could speak to thee, then this is what I would say:

Dearest Sheikheli, thou knowest that I ~~have~~<sup>he</sup> ever loved thee. I try ~~to~~ my best to be good to thee in every way I can and in every way in which thou needest me. I have failed or fallen short in many ways; but I try and I love thee forever and I know thou hast loved me and ever will. When Badriyyeli came, thou knowest that I recognized her for what she is and that I loved her immediately and forever. Albeit I do not recognize thee for what thou art as well as Badriyyeli does - I have nonetheless ever known thee and I see thy qualities in everything thou shou

est - be it "bagli" or book! And  
I love thee and ever have not only for  
thy perfection but also for thy dear self.

When I was a young woman and  
quite unformed, you took me up to live  
with you in a celestial place. You filled  
me with wine, corrected me, purified me,  
consecrated me, treated me in a sacred  
manner and transformed me such  
that I could never be the same again.  
Then, without in any way abandoning  
me, you set me gently down from this  
celestial place when your true wife  
and shakti appeared. I loved her  
with all my heart - and I loved you -  
as I had before - and I loved the two  
of you together. I felt fulfilled and  
as if I had found my true place - the one  
which corresponded to my nature - in  
being an intimate friend to both of you  
and in being uniquely privileged to  
be a witness to your intimate being.  
I knew in my center that I was not  
meant to be thy wife, but thy friend; and  
that I was no longer needed in the  
same way; albeit I felt in no wise re-



lected and was ever a friend to you both.

Thou knowest, dearest Sheikhele, that I am not married to Sidi Abdul Ali; albeit I intend to take care of him as long as ~~he~~<sup>he</sup> lives.

Sheikhele: wouldst thou bless me now and give me to someone who loves thee with all his heart, who loves me and all that thou hast done to me and who promises to take care of thy Amineli?

Wouldst thou give me to one who would walk on the spiritual path with me - helping me when I falter? Can I not be faithful to thee and to all my people, intrinsically, with discretion, secrecy and tact - without brutally breaking any social form? To me this seems easy because I feel the help of the Holy Virgin whose presence has ever been a sign for me in this situation.

Because I have belonged to thee, and still do as thy dearest friend and disciple (or if I dare not say that I am thy dearest friend, thou art mine) ... because I have belonged to thee, I

have much to give that comes from Thee  
 Someone who has ever longed to  
 know thee loves me deeply and loves  
 what he sees of thee in me; I love him  
 for his qualities and I need him. When  
 I tell him of thee, he is transformed,  
 healed, grateful and always more  
 fervently directed towards God, as  
 am I.

Dearest Sheikhele, I ask thee:  
 wilt thou bless us and <sup>(give)</sup> me to him from  
 thyself? Dearest Badriyyeli, wilt  
 thou accept me ever as one who con-  
 siders thee her dearest friend?

Sheikhele, thou art in Paradise here  
 and now - as we all can be. It is  
 thus that I view this situation with  
 its multiple relationships - as seen  
 from above and in the heart of the law.

I love thee and Badriyyeli and  
 I am, as ever, thy

Amineli

Glimballo